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TIME AND DEMYTHOLOGIZING

A STUDY OF TIME, IN HEIDEGGER'S THOUGHT  
AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR EXISTENTIALIST THEOLOGY

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## Preface

This work aims at clarifying the problem of interpreting the Bible, particularly the New Testament, and thereby making some contribution to its better understanding. Its approach is from the perspective of "demythologizing," a program initiated by Rudolf Bultmann. It concerns itself, therefore, with human existence, and takes this "existence" as a fundamental clue to an interpretation of all that is "the world of man," a concept which gathers within its purview everything about which man has any knowledge whatsoever.

But this study takes another "fundamental clue" to the interpretation of "man's world," namely, Time itself, as the implicit control, so to speak, in Bultmann's Christological formulation, "present eschatological occurrence." With these two clues, existence and time, I sought out a contemporary thinker who takes both of these clues quite seriously. Martin Heidegger is such a thinker.

Beginning, then, from within the "demythologizing controversy," I sketch an outline of this controversy, using as a guide the two terms "kerygma" and "myth." Then, an attempt is made to build a bridge, as it were, between demythologizing and the thought of Heidegger.

Following this Introduction to Heidegger's thought, seven of his works are considered, beginning with his Introduction to Being and Time, and ending with the two essays which constitute



Identity and Differenz. The way leads through an analysis of "objectification" as the mode of knowledge by which human existence determines its "world" and "everything about which man has any knowledge whatsoever." With objectification as a theme, the way continues through considerations of freedom with its base (ground) in the Nothing which is wholly future, and of Truth which is likewise rooted in the future. But this latter consideration includes a demonstration of the need to examine, rather than Nothingness and Futurity, History itself. For, it is only in examining history that freedom with its roots in Futurity is enabled to express itself "historically." Historicity, then, as the mode of man's existence, is examined for its Identity with Futurity, i.e., freedom, and for its Difference from it: its historicity, its determination as "history."

From this study I conclude that existence is both historical and non-historical, i.e., eternal, and that these two modes of existence (existence and ex-sistence) are grounded in the flux of Time itself, and thus attest to the primacy, the creative and limiting power, of Time. Time, then, becomes a clue to an interpretation of the biblical doctrine of God with its "mythical" modes of representing this primacy of Time over all that "is."

In the Conclusion an emphasis is laid upon the tentative character of such a proposal. And it is suggested that the only means of determining the legitimacy of this "clue" is the

Bible itself. However, as Bultmann's Theology of the New Testament is already an "existentialist" interpretation of the New Testament, the readiest way of gaining insight into the validity of this "clue" leads to this work of Bultmann. Whereupon, an analysis of that portion of this work which formulates the concept of "righteousness," i.e., salvation, as mediated through the "present eschatological occurrence" is made. And, though still tentative after such a brief analysis, this "clue" nevertheless now has intimations of merit clinging to it. An exhaustive analysis of this work by Bultmann is therefore indicated, using as its analytical criterion this doctrine of Time culled from this study of Heidegger's thought.

My resources for the most part have been those of the libraries of Trinity College, Glasgow, and the University of Glasgow with its smaller departmental (Systematic Theology) adjunct. I want to express my appreciation to these institutions, and in particular to the Faculty of Divinity. Professors Ian Henderson and Ronald Gregor Smith are tireless in their efforts to help research students, and the former, as my advisor, gave most freely not only of his remarkable knowledge and wit, but of his warm personal understanding as well. Eclipsing all such, however, has been the "background" contribution made by my wife, without whose continuing love this work would have been quite impossible.

Mount Hermon, California  
July, 1965

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ronald Gregor Smith



## Chapter I

### Introduction

Our purpose in this treatise is to make some small contribution to what has been aptly termed the "demythologizing<sup>1</sup> controversy." We want to make this quite clear at the outset because we are certain that as the reader moves into the body of this study, the question will repeatedly arise, "What has this to do with demythologizing?" So, in order to secure a positive connection, we intend now to build the bridge, as it were, so that the correlation that is possible will not only be natural, but inevitable. In order, then, that this can happen, we must first present a brief description of demythologizing and suggest something of the controversy. Secondly, we must give an insight into the nature of this study and what it is we are trying to do. That is, the connection between them must be specified and defended. And, finally, our procedure is to be outlined. These, then, are the tasks to be undertaken in this Introduction.

#### 1. The Demythologizing Controversy

The term "demythologizing" is descriptive of a discipline which Professor Rudolf Bultmann has taken unto himself as a means whereby the New Testament witness is up-dated, in a manner of speaking, in such a way that it becomes as meaningful

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1. This term was coined in English by Prof. Ian Henderson in his book, Myth in the New Testament (SCM Press, London, 1958), as a translation of Bultmann's term Entmythologizierer.

to this generation as it apparently was in the first centuries A. D. Demythologizing is a method of interpretation based on the premise that science has made so many changes in the world-view since biblical times that modern man is virtually powerless to understand the New Testament as it stands. Its writers, it seems, living when they did, saw things in a way utterly foreign to the way we see them now. According to Bultmann, their world-view included, for example, a cosmology which posited a three-tiered universe: the heavens with their gods above, the earth beneath, and the nether regions of Sheol, or the Shades, beneath the earth.<sup>2</sup> The common representations of various "phenomena" which were current when the New Testament was written were, of course, incorporated in its corpus, and thus infect the whole of it. These scientifically primitive representations Bultmann has termed "myths." But myths, he goes on to say, were not intended to be explanations of natural phenomena. They were intended, rather, to express...

"...man's conviction that the origin and purpose of the world in which he lives are to be sought not within it but beyond it - that is, beyond the realm of known and tangible reality - and that this realm is perpetually dominated and menaced by those mysterious powers which are its source and limit. Myth is also an expression of man's awareness that he is not lord of his own being. It expresses his sense of dependence... [and his] ...belief that in this state of dependence he can be delivered from the forces within the visible world."<sup>3</sup>

Demythologizing "breaks" these myths in order that they may no longer be barriers to understanding. Once the myths have been

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2. Kerygma and Myth, Harper and Bros., New York (Torchbook Edition), 1961: Bultmann's essay "New Testament and Mythology" (pp. 1-44), p. 1.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 10f.



explained, then the thoughtful reader can begin to cope with the heart, so to speak, of the New Testament witness.

Now, the "heart" of the New Testament witness has been termed "kerygma" and means proclamation, communication, but more specifically, a communication from God to man. A synonym for kerygma is revelation; another is grace. And the New Testament takes the point of view that Christ is God's communication to us, that Christ is revelation, that Christ is God's grace. The kerygma, then, is the message of the New Testament when this is understood to be the communication of the grace of God in Christ to man. We put the matter as "communication" in order to dispel any notion that the biblical witness as it stands is kerygma. It is not. Kerygma is the communication of grace to man. Listeners and readers are as much involved as the New Testament writers and Christian preachers. Kerygma means that God not only "speaks," but he is "heard" as well. And more! He is acknowledged to be God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Savior.

Demythologizing, then, is an attempt to interpret the New Testament in such a way that God "speaks" to modern man through this interpretation, and communicates his grace.

We have the case, then, of an original interpretation which was canonized by the church, and a history of interpretation which has evolved in the years since, this history offering all sorts of interpretations of scripture: some feasible, some wierd, some utterly ridiculous, and some quite reasonable

and, to a degree, acceptable. But this "history of interpretation" gives rise to a considerable problem. Anyone who is at all aware of this history cannot but be impressed with the great variety of interpretations - all dealing with the same text. And he is a dull fellow at best who does not begin to question the validity of the interpretation he is hearing, or reading, or making himself.

Bultmann, he will be happy to hear, is a New Testament interpreter who has taken the problem of historical relativity quite seriously.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, one could almost say that his interpretation has evolved in consequence of his wrestling with this problem, and that it is attractive to many people today because he effects a tenable solution to it. The solution to historical relativity, he would maintain, is to be found in a new self-understanding, that is, in an understanding of existence - human existence. That understanding of human existence which is wholly dependent upon historic formulations of truth, he would say, runs aground on the rocks of historical relativity, and more often than not ends in relativism and nihilism,<sup>5</sup> an attitude epitomized in Pilate's skeptical retort to Jesus, "What is truth?"<sup>6</sup>

There are grounds for believing that at the time of the

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4. Cf. History and Eschatology, Harper & Bros., New York (Torchbook Edition) 1962, p. 10f.

5. *Ibid.*

6. Jn. 18:38.



writing of the New Testament, there were, even then, many different interpretations being propounded. The author of Luke-Acts, for example, was involved in sorting them out and presenting his own account of the "truth."<sup>7</sup> Thus, we can be reasonably certain that historical relativity is not at all a new problem. This reasonable certainty makes Bultmann's interpretation the more convincing when his solution to the problem of historical relativity, as crystallized in his understanding of existence, is suggested to be precisely what was intended by the New Testament writers themselves. That is, Bultmann contends that the New Testament authors were trying to communicate to their readers a new self-understanding, a new understanding of existence. He maintains that New Testament thought is primarily "existential interpretation":

"The theological thoughts of the New Testament ... claim to have meaning for the present not as theoretical teachings, timeless general truths, but only as the expression of an understanding of human existence which for the man of today also is a possibility for his understanding of himself - a possibility which is opened to him by the New Testament itself, in that it not only shows him that such self-understanding is the reply to the kerygma as the word of God addressing him, but also imparts to him the kerygma itself."<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps we should take a moment to differentiate between "existential interpretation" and the broader, more comprehensive term "existentialism." Of the latter, Macquarrie says:

7. Lk. 1:1-4.

8. Theology of the New Testament, Vol. II, p. 251 (See note 11 below).



"Existentialism is not a philosophy but a type of philosophy, and a type so flexible that it can appear in such widely differing forms as the atheism of Sartre, the Catholicism of Marcel, the Protestantism of Kierkegaard, the Judaism of Buber, and the Orthodoxy of Berdyaev. And again, though the name of existentialism is relatively new, it does not follow that this type of philosophy is new. Mounier has constructed a family tree of existentialism with its roots going far back into the pre-Christian era."<sup>9</sup>

Before Kierkegaard, who is generally regarded as the "father" of modern existentialism, there were Pascal, Maine de Biran, Augustine, and Socrates - names which have been associated with this type of thought.<sup>10</sup>

Now, within existentialism, as a "type of philosophy," we find a contemporary expression which has profoundly influenced Bultmann's "existential interpretation" of the New Testament, namely, that of his colleague and friend, Martin Heidegger. Macquarrie has made an interesting and enlightening study of the relation between Bultmann's Theology of the New Testament<sup>11</sup> and Heidegger's Being and Time<sup>12</sup> in a book which he called An Existentialist Theology. There he demonstrates how Bultmann appears to have depended in large measure upon Heidegger's philosophical exposition of existence. Indeed, the extent to which Bultmann appears to have depended on Heidegger has been criticised by Macquarrie and others,<sup>13</sup> this criticism, however, being but one of many which, along with rebuttals, etc., constitute the considerable literature which has been called the demythologizing

9. Here Macquarrie cites Mounier's Existentialist Philosophies: an Introduction, Rockliff, p. 3.

10. An Existentialist Theology, SCM Press, London, 1955, p. 16f.

11. Op. cit., Vols. I & II, trans. K. Grobel, SCM Press, London, 1952 and 1955 resp.

12. Op. cit., trans. J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson, SCM Press, London 1962

13. Op. cit. and The Scope of Demythologizing, Harper & Bros., New York, 1960. Here Macquarrie discusses Bultmann and his critics and therefore provides a suitable bibliography of this literature.



controversy.

The controversy itself, as we have intimated, covers a wide range of subjects all related to the central issues so succinctly captured in the title given to the several volumes of Kerycma and Myth.<sup>14</sup> Rather than become involved in peripheral concerns, we have confined our discussion to these two concepts - without, however, doing justice to either. But, if the reader wants to pursue the matter, he is referred to the titles we are citing and to the bibliographies contained therein.

It should now be clear that we are assuming the whole of this controversy. The scope of this treatise is purposefully limited to a study of "time" in the thought of Heidegger, and to a few provisional suggestions as to its possible significance to this controversy. We have felt that we could not even begin to do justice to it within the spatial (and temporal) limitations which we feel are appropriate to a study of this nature.

## 2. Heidegger and Demythologizing.

In this preliminary consideration of Heidegger's thought we do not leave the matter of demythologizing, but are compelled, rather, to see how they relate in this matter of "time." What we have done so far is to suggest something of the nature of the demythologizing controversy. But in the process, we

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14. W. Bartsch has edited at least six volumes under the title Kerycma und Mythos, Herbert Reich-Evangelischer Verlag, Hamburg. R. H. Fuller's English translation, Kerycma and Myth (see note 2 above) is but a partial translation of Vol. 1: pp. 45-101, and 124-90.



cited what seemed to be major issues, namely, historical relativity (which included relativity in textual interpretation) and existential interpretation (an attempt to interpret human existence in the light of historical relativity). Now, when anyone attempts to cope with the problem of the relativity of interpretation, he is himself interpreting. This dilemma is called the "hermeneutical circle." It is maintained that it is impossible ever to be free of this circle. On the other hand, to see that there is manifest circularity involved, can be said to be an insight which is itself already free of the circle - else its "circularity" could not be perceived.

As regards these two points of view: the first maintains that every interpretation, because it is an interpretation, will take its place in the history of interpretation and become just another one of many. Now, this first stance is also the second when it is put this way. It sees the circularity involved. Do we, then, have two points of view, or just one? When looking yet again, we see that there is a difference between them. The first says that it is impossible to get outside of this circle, and the second says that such insight is itself already outside it. The difference between these two attitudes, we contend, is enormous, and is based in the difference between concrete, i.e., historical, phenomena, say, for example, Bultmann's interpretation of the New Testament, and "phenomena" which are not in the least historical, or concrete, say, for example, Bultmann himself, the man.<sup>14a</sup>

14a. This suggestion that "Bultmann himself" is "not in the least historical, or concrete," is explained in a general way in the pages immediately following, but a more explicit explanation might well be given here.

We are alluding to the "self" (in this case, Bultmann's) which, on Heidegger's interpretation, is always prior to the  
(continued on p. 8a)



self which Bultmann himself "objectifies" and knows as an "historical, or concrete," being. His "objectified" self is objectified by a "self" which exists in a realm prior to its objectifying activity. This prior self is the agent, the objectifier. And even when this objectifier is itself being objectified and seen, as in Heidegger's analysis, to be prior, such thought is not in point of fact preceding, or moving in advance of the agency which is thinking, i.e., "objectifying," in this manner. Hence, our claim that there is a fundamental difference between the "phenomenal," i.e., historical, concrete, self and that "self" which cannot be so objectified because of its prior relation to the objectifying activity itself.

This attempt to isolate human agency becomes more poignant when we move from objectifying another person (who as Buber has so aptly shown in I and Thou is all too easily seen to be an "it") to objectifying ourselves. When the reader reflects upon his own agency as an objectifier of his historic self and of what "he" has done, or is doing now, it should become immediately apparent that "he" is doing the reflecting. In the next instant, now aware of this activity, the reader may reflect upon this agency of his. But try as he may, he cannot in his thought move in advance of his thinking. That is, thought cannot precede the thinker himself.

It is the "thinker," then, to which we allude, the agent of all objectifying thought, the ex-sisting agent who, by virtue of his very ex-sistence, limits and otherwise circumscribes thought by being its thinker, its originator.

In our reference to "Bultmann himself, the man," we are speaking of Bultmann, the ex-sisting originator of his thought, only the latter of which is accessible to us - should he decide to record it for posterity.

A fuller explanation of this relation between the objectified and the objectifying selves cannot be made here in the Introduction, for much of the analysis which follows in the ensuing chapters is requisite to an adequate understanding of the seemingly cryptic language being used here. I plead, therefore, for the reader's patience.



Now the matter begins to get a bit sticky, and we had better do some explaining. The "difference" which we are trying to suggest is that between historical phenomena and some-"thing" that is not historical. But, is there such a difference? Of historical phenomena we have some understanding, but what do we mean by non-historical "phenomena"?

When we explain this, we will also be elucidating our point of departure from Bultmann's doctrine. Bultmann maintains that revelation occurs only to and through existence, and in particular, only in the preaching and hearing of the word.<sup>15</sup> All well and good. But, he goes on to say that revelation never occurs except "a place can be assigned also in the context of natural and historical happening."<sup>16</sup> His insistence upon the concrete historicity of revelation roots Christianity to the historic figure of Jesus of Nazareth, and Bultmann is quite clear that this root is fundamental to the faith.<sup>17</sup> It is this root which he believes protects the faith from "subjectivism."

When Bultmann insists on both of these conditions - apparently without qualification - we suspect him of trying to have his cake and eat it. He wants it both ways at the same time.

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15. See, e.g., his essay, "Revelation in the New Testament," in Existence and Faith: Shorter Writings of Rudolf Bultmann, trans. and intro. by S. Ogden, Meridian Books, Inc., New York, 1960.

16. This is Macquarrie's summary (Scope, p. 241) and he refers us to Bultmann's essay, "Zum Problem der Entmythologisierung" in Kerygma und Mythos, II, esp. pp. 196ff.

17. See, e.g., Kerygma and Myth (English), p. 34.



and this, we contend, is impossible. The critical factor here we have underscored. Had he specified that at one moment existence can be non-historical, and in the next is very much historical, we would not quibble. But, as it stands, we must argue that there is a radical difference between historical phenomena and existence, and that this difference is a matter of "time." It is at the same time a matter of life and death.

We must be careful here, because Bultmann is fully aware of Heidegger's understanding of existence as future to the "objectified" "self" which Dasein "encounters" in consequence of his outward projection towards... in an over-casting act of will (unwillen) which makes possible a priori the self's objectification as "there."<sup>18</sup> But does he really appreciate the time element involved here? If existence must project in objectification, then, it does so from a position that is prior to the objects encountered. It projects from a moment, if you will, that is prior to the object's arrival as "object." Hence, it projects from a time which is prior to objectification as a completed act. It projects from a time, then, which is future to all objectified phenomena. Existence, therefore, dwells in a time which is prior to historical phenomena. There is a difference between existence and the objectified phenomena (including the "self") which make up the "world."

As it happens, this difference is infinitesimally small. It is but a moment, the twinkling of an eye - even less. Never-

13. Most of the allusions here and throughout this paragraph are treated in detail in our Chap. III below. But our use of unwillen here is discussed in detail in Chap. IV below, specifically on pp. 140ff.



theless, this tiny interval is sufficient to make the radical difference of which we speak: the difference between human existence (life) and history (death). History, we maintain, is the realm of knowledge, the realm of language and objectification. And the relativity which we perceive in history, i.e., knowledge, i.e., language, i.e., objectification, is possible only in virtue of non-relativity: an unknowable (objectively), unspeakable (except objectively), and unobjectifiable realm which is prior, i.e., future, and absolutely and eternally so.<sup>19</sup> So great and so small is this difference.

As we have said, in close proximity to this prior dimension which we are calling existence, is the realm of objectification, i.e., history, etc. Yet, this difference is sufficient to constitute everything in this vast realm of objectification, viz., the "world," as but an approximation. That is, all knowledge of history, etc., is only "approximation knowledge." Kierkegaard made this quite clear some time ago.<sup>20</sup> The realm of history is the realm of relativity.

On the other hand, this difference, precisely in virtue of its approximation is proximal enough for our purposes to constitute one pole in a relation. We began by demonstrating the futurity of existence relative to history in order to establish the Difference as such. But once this Difference is

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19. These characterizations derive from our Chapter V. below.

20. See in particular his Philosophical Fragments, and Concluding Unscientific Postscript, trans. W. Lowry and Swenson, resp., Princeton University Press, 1936 and 1941 resp.

seen, and something of its significance is appreciated, then, we must return, as it were, to that "base" from which futurity was discerned.

It is no good simply to posit existence as prior to history and leave it there. Existence must be seen to be related to history in a way that can only be characterized as an Identity.<sup>21</sup> It was from the base in history that we stepped back, as it were, into the future in order to gain a transcendental view of history, which perspective enables insight, for example, into the "circularity" of the hermeneutical circle.

Now we have to reverse<sup>22</sup> our orientation and appreciate something of the significance of that base which we left in order to find one that is free of relativity. But, in this case we need no introduction. The return to history is an easy one. This, for the most part, is where we have learned to live and move and have our being. We are "historical" creatures, or so we are repeatedly told. Yes, we live in time alright, but it is in historical time, they say. Thus do we suspect that in the process of "civilization," history has come to determine our understanding of time. But, historical time is static; it is captured, as it were, and frozen in "events." But events are possible only in virtue of stopping time, of cutting it off and bringing it to end in order to constitute the "unity" of events. All knowledge is rooted in unity, and unity is an approximation of time, e.g., the "second," and

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21. Identity and Difference are treated in Chapter VII below.

22. This "reversal" is the heart of our Chapter VI below.



as approximation is static, i.e., dead. Time cannot be approximated or measured. Only events, beings, things, units, can be measured and used in calculation.

Because these things characterize life in historical time, we fear death, and do all we can to avoid it and the other consequences of "historical" life: its transience, its ever-changing being born and dying routine, its relativity, its static representations of existence. But, at the same time, seemingly, we are tied to it. Here is that formula again: "at the same time": this bugaboo, this fly in the ointment, but this time, it may be legitimate. For, now, having seen both sides to the coin, so to speak, that is existence, we are prepared to see the dialectic when we insist that historical truth is true, and insist at the same time that it is false. Insisting on the historical Jesus as the root of Christian doctrine is only valid when, at the same time, it is rejected. Thus do we capture something of the dynamic that is revelation: how that it is at the same time both eternal and historical. And that which is common to both, we see, is Time. Thus does it happen that existence must seek the durable, the eternal, the non-historical, when all the while it is here already, this instant, now.

Having come back down to earth, so to speak, we have completed one cycle in the movement of time, and have distinguished a dialectic between the two modes of existence: that which is future, i.e., ex-sistence, and that which is historical, i.e., just plain historical existence. This "relation" is a temporal

one: in one moment it is a case of Identity with history, etc., and in the next it is a case of utter Difference from them. When these two moments are seen to be the constitutive elements of what Kant called "the now-sequence," then we can begin to appreciate something of the dynamicity of the experience of selfhood, the alternating current, as it were, that makes possible both the historicity and the eternity of human existence. For, the constant factor here is Time: the moment. Both Identity and Difference are moments of Time, both their distinction and their integrity (Zusammengehörigkeit) being made possible by Time itself when conceived to be fundamental relation: the fundamental relation: that relations which grounds all else a priori. When Identity reigns, then is existence immersed in and identical with history, knowledge, language, etc. But in the moment of Difference, then is existence immersed in eternity. In this moment, identity with history has disintegrated and ex-sistence has burst free of its bondage to static representation; it has utterly rejected being "at the same time" with anything or anyone that "is" - including the "historical, i.e., the objectified, self."

The rhythm of Identity and Difference is as close as we can come to actually discerning Time. This "rhythm" is the fundamental relation which was discerned in the Old Testament as "covenant" before it was "forgotten" (Vergessenheit) and became identified with history, only to be discovered again and termed "the new covenant" and secured in that existence



which was Jesus of Nazareth. Thus do we see that on the one hand we can analyse Time as it is identical with "historical" time, i.e., the phenomenon, but "at the same time," we know this to be a static, non-temporal representation which does not begin to capture the dynamic which is Time itself. Time is manifestly different from all such objectification. Nevertheless, when we have been through this cycle: from existence to future ex-sistence, and back again, then we can begin to appreciate something of Time's creative power. It alone makes possible this hopping back and forth; it makes objectification and, therefore, history possible; it makes ex-sistence - to which we flee from history - possible. Time is a priori in every possible respect.

Seen in this light, and taking into account what Bultmann has suggested about existential interpretation as being a feasible interpretation of the intent of the New Testament writers, then we begin to wonder if there is some correlation between Time, as inadequately grasped here but grasped nonetheless, and God, as inadequately grasped in scripture but grasped nonetheless. Is the biblical construct, i.e., its doctrine of God, a "mythical" view of Time: an appreciation of its primacy over all spatial phenomena, its creative power, its future, i.e., eschatological, aspect, its absolute limiting effect on man, its otherness to all attempts to grasp it, its steadfast dependability throughout all of history, world without end (apparently)? That is to say, is our present-day understanding of Time

as it relates to existence equivalent to the biblical writers' understanding of God as he related to their existence? These questions haunt me, and demand some effort to answer them. Hence, our study.

Such is our attempt to construct a bridge of sorts between Heidegger's thought and Bultmann's program of demythologizing. We trust that this attempt has not been without some value as an introduction to what follows. For, it was from the background of Bultmann's thought with its emphasis upon "the present eschatological occurrence"<sup>23</sup> and its obvious reference to time that we proceeded to investigate Heidegger's understanding of time. In a way we are guilty of what Heidegger himself appears to have done, namely, to start out with an assumption and proceed to demonstrate its validity. Did he not begin with the notion that Temporality was a clue to the meaning of Being?<sup>24</sup> It is hardly surprising, then, to find that he ends his analysis of Dasein with an analysis of its Being as Temporality.<sup>24</sup>

However, it has often been suggested in the history of thought that one has to have some notion of its answer before a question can be posed properly. Some have called this requisite "pre-understanding." What we were looking for, we found. Whether or not our findings will be relevant to the demythologizing controversy, however, is a question that only "history" can determine. All we can do now, is wait and see.

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23. See esp. Chap. V, pp. 270-352 in Theology of the New Testament Vol. I.

24. These allusions are treated below in our Chapter II.



### 3. Our Procedure.

We will not "spend" time saying here what will be made plain later. Suffice it to say that we have been arbitrary to a degree in choosing the texts for this study, but not altogether so. We are confident that the six works chosen constitute something of a unity without, however, representing a particular phase in Heidegger's thought. They span thirty years, so, represent a fair cross-section both of his thought and of its development.

We have tried to keep our exposition close to the texts, and to be detailed in our study of them. The extent to which this has been done may give the reader cause to wonder why so little effort has been given to correlating them more closely and avoiding the repetition which occurs in a few instances. We have felt that the tendency to interpolate is kept to a minimum by this procedure, that such repetition as occurs is nominal and always sheds more light than was shed before, and, finally, that the correlation that should be done will be done by the reader himself if our interpretation approaches the unity which we think it does.

However, even though we have kept close to the texts, what issues from our study is interpretation. What Heidegger says is always colored by our "interest," namely, to examine his thought for its temporal illusions. Our interpretation, then, will differ considerably from others which have been made because



of the impact that this "Interest" has upon the whole matter of interpretation.<sup>25</sup> To our knowledge, no one has attempted to do just what we try here to do. For this reason, what issues from this study may contribute something to the question of demythologizing as well as present Heidegger in a way heretofore never done. We believe that Heidegger's significance for existentialist theology is yet fully to be appreciated.

Finally, it should be mentioned that the following study was very much of an experiment. We had no idea when we began what would materialize. Therefore, an obvious development occurs. Some attempts are made to pull the insights together as they occur, but little effort has been given to going back and revising early chapters so that they conform with the more developed thought at the end (as summarized in this introduction). As no study of this order is accomplished in a day, time will take its toll in terms of minor inconsistencies and variations in terminology, but these do not seriously affect the results. We do ask the reader, however, to make some allowances for the difficulty in formulating a doctrine of Time - assuming for the moment that this doctrine is a correlate to the biblical doctrine of God. But for our tedium, obscurity, and awkwardness we make no excuse, but rather beg the reader's pardon.

So much for preliminaries. Now, on to Heidegger and Time.

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25. See Bultmann's essay "The Problem of Hermeneutics" in Essays, trans. J. Greig, SCM Press, London, 1955.

## Chapter II

B. Heidegger's Introduction to Being and Time

So much for our own introduction (and conclusion) to Heidegger's thought. Now we turn to his own introduction. But is such a move possible? Is there indeed a general introduction to all that he has written? We hold that his introduction to Being and Time suffices for our purposes, for in it he outlines his life's work to the extent that this can be done near the beginning of that work. Therefore, let us see what he has to say.

He begins, in the Forward, with an appropriate quotation from Plato which he translates:<sup>1</sup>

"For manifestly you have long been aware of what you mean when you use the expression 'being.' We, however, who used to think we understood it, have now become perplexed."<sup>2</sup>

Because he is convinced that as it was in Plato's time, so it is in our own, Heidegger states that he intends to "raise anew the question of the meaning of Being,"<sup>3</sup> even though nowadays there appears to be no perplexity about it. Indeed, he expresses his intent most succinctly:

"Our aim in the following treatise is to work out the question of the meaning of Being and to do so concretely."<sup>4</sup>

But this over-all aim is qualified by his next statement, and in a way which is to distinguish his approach from all previous attempts - dating back to the first of the pre-Socratics:

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1. We use Macquarrie and Robinson's translation unless otherwise indicated. All citations from Being and Time in this chapter will henceforth be indicated only by page number.

2. Plato, Sophistes 244a (Heidegger's note).

3. p. 19. 4. p. 19.



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"Our provisional aim is the Interpretation of time as the possible horizon for any understanding whatsoever of Being."5

Here, then, in the shortest possible compass, is the thrust of his monumental work. He wants to work out the meaning of Being in terms of time, to the extent that this latter makes it possible so to do. We underscore the word "meaning" because Tillich has it that the difference between philosophy and theology is that the former is concerned to define the "structure" of Being, whereas theology is concerned to explicate its "meaning."6 Now, it is probable that these two men are intending this word "meaning" in somewhat different ways, but it can hardly be doubted that Tillich's theology is "ontologically" oriented. This kindred interest in Being suggests at the very least that Heidegger's focus upon the "meaning of Being" could, as it has with Tillich, have significant theological implications. And we maintain that this is precisely the case. For the moment, however, it is enough merely to suggest the possibility that Heidegger's work has theological significance and to point out that for Heidegger the "meaning" of Being is to be sought through an "Interpretation of time" as the possible limiting, or determining, factor "for any understanding whatsoever of Being."

Heidegger's Introduction, then, aims at "exposing" the "question of the meaning of Being."7 And he begins by building a case for reopening the whole question of Being. For, it "has today been forgotten." What Plato and Aristotle achieved relative to this question was destined to "persist" through various treatments and

5. p. 19; As Macquarrie suggests, "horizon" for Heidegger means the extreme limit past which it is impossible to go. (fn. p. 19).

6. Systematic Theology, Vol. I, Nisbet, London, 1953, p. 25.

7. p. 21.



alterations which have appeared since, right down to the "logic" of Hegel.<sup>8</sup> But what these Greeks achieved "has long since become trivialized." Indeed, there appears to be modern-day sanctions for the superfluity and "complete neglect" of the question of Being. It is apparently "the most universal and the emptiest of concepts." It so resists definition that attempts to define it are deemed a waste. For, ...

"... an understanding of Being is already included in conceiving anything which one apprehends as a being, a thing."<sup>8a</sup>

And further, this understanding is one of a basic unity "as over against the multiplicity of 'categories applicable to things.'"<sup>9</sup> But its universality and basic unity do not make it any clearer. "It is rather the darkest of all concepts."

Being's alleged indefinability (because of its universality) does present a problem, but should the difficulty of solution mean that the problem no longer exists? Not so! Its indefinability "does not eliminate the question of its meaning," but rather "demands" that we take another long, hard look at it. And as to its self-evidence, one must conclude that if we already have a pre-understanding of Being but know not its meaning, then "it is necessary in principle to raise the question again."

These objections have not been "reasons" for neglecting the question, but "prejudices," evidently growing out of the question's inherent difficulty. So much the more should an attempt be made to formulate the question adequately.<sup>10</sup> But all we have to begin with is a "vague average understanding of Being," a pre-understanding. Therefore, "an investigation of the meaning of Being cannot be expected to give ... clarification ...



at the outset."<sup>11</sup> Our first task is to "develop the concept of Being," and then, perhaps, we can determine what this still obscure understanding means and what road blocks to its full illumination are inevitable.

But one of the first obstacles we encounter in an attempt to develop the concept is that the Being of beings<sup>12</sup> is not itself a being. Being must therefore be "exhibited in a way of its own."<sup>13</sup> The "meaning" of Being, then, will also have to be sought in a way peculiar to itself. Now, if Being is "what" is to be sought, and it is the Being of beings, then "beings" are what must be interrogated for "their" Being. We will seek after "what" they "are" in themselves "without falsification." The method of interrogation, then, is all-important.

But what beings do we interrogate? And how do we do so "without falsification"? What shall be our method? These questions are being put by those who are enquiring after Being and its meaning. And, in asking such questions, the enquirers themselves are comporting themselves in their Being in a peculiar way towards Being. Indeed, it is one of their "modes" of Being. The enquirers themselves, then, are beings who seek after Being and its meaning, and therefore constitute a "peculiar" being, the interrogation of which (for its Being) could conceivably shed much light on Being.<sup>14</sup> It is this being which Heidegger chooses from amongst all the others to investigate as to its

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11. p. 25.

12. We have elected generally to translate das Seiende as "beings" (small "b") rather than, say, "essents" (Manheim) or "entities" (Macquarrie & Robinson) because of its relation to Sein, "Being." It is a common term and is more universal than "things" and less clumsy than "entities."

13. p. 26.

14. p. 26f.

Being. He wants to begin by determining, so far as is possible, the Being of this being that enquirers after Being: the Being of "Dasein."<sup>15</sup>

At this point, Heidegger puts down any objections to the apparent "circularity" of this approach, which objections, he says, "can be cited at any time in the study of first principles." Such arguments, he maintains, "are sterile" relative to "concrete" modes of investigation. The approach to Being by way of beings has been the way of ontology throughout its history. And although Being is presupposed by this approach, this presupposition is merely of a vague, undifferentiated pre-understanding. And unless one takes this course, no approach can be made at all. For, the Being we seek is the Being "of" beings. In any case, this presupposition "belongs to the essential constitution of Dasein itself" and, therefore, is a considerable factor in determining the Being of this particular being, and in interpreting its meaning.<sup>16</sup> This "factor" merely suggests the more that the Dasein is related in a very special and possibly a unique way to Being itself.

Having said these things, Heidegger is still not convinced that his readers shall have been satisfied as to the reason for

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15. We use this German word as though it were English, so familiar has it become to students of Heidegger. Constructed from the German words for "there" (Da) and "Being" (Sein), Dasein is used in everyday language "for the kind of Being that belongs to persons." (Macquarrie's fn., p. 27.) The peculiarity of German grammar is such that in English translation the word is usually rendered in what seems to us an impersonal way: as an "it," rather than a "he" or "she." Generally, we follow Heidegger's manner of speaking of it.

16. p. 28.



reopening the question of Being. Will it not be a matter of "soaring speculation about the most general of generalities"? Is it not to be just more of the same? While the history of ontology may suggest such to be the case, this approach sees the question of Being to be "both the most basic and the most concrete" of all questions.<sup>17</sup> It is so basic as to underlie all that has been accumulated to date by every science whatever its area of interest, be it History, Nature, Space, Life, Man, Language, or other. "Science" interrogates the beings in its area in order to establish precisely "what" they "are," and "how" they are. Indeed, some sciences even offer with their explanations their "meaning." Yet, "scientific" investigation has, all along, been done solely on the basis of a "vague, average understanding," a pre-understanding, of the Being of these beings, and on no more than this. The question of the Being of beings and its meaning should, therefore, be the root concern of the sciences, but they have been satisfied that their descriptions and explanations truly represent the Being of the beings which they study, even though the history of these disciplines very clearly shows a gradual change in the substance of their results. And occasionally, the whole structure of a science is shaken by the devastating discovery that some of its most cherished notions have been wrong. Newtonian physics, for example, was revolutionized by Einstein. The question of Being, then, ...

"...aims ... at ascertaining the a priori conditions not

17. p. 29.

only for the possibility of the sciences which examine beings..., and, in so doing, already operate with an understanding of Being, but also for the possibility of those ontologies themselves which are prior to the ontical sciences and which provide their foundations."<sup>18</sup>

Until the meaning of Being is cleared up, all ontology and, therefore, all science is perched upon a precarious ledge, namely, that of relativity, and, in consequence, is only provisional.

This effort to establish the "ontological priority" of the problem of Being and its meaning is augmented with one intended to establish its "ontical" priority as well. This latter suggests that that mode of being which is "scientific" is "not the only manner of Being" which Dasein can have, "nor is it the one which lies closest."<sup>19</sup> Indeed, for Dasein, Being is an issue, and this "concern" for its own Being is "a constitutive state of Dasein's Being." The Dasein's "pre-understanding" of Being, then, is "pre-ontological" in the sense that every Dasein is concerned to maintain its own Being in the way that it understands Being.<sup>20</sup>

"That kind of Being towards which Dasein can comport itself in one way or another, and always does comport itself somehow, we call 'existence' [Existenz]."<sup>21</sup>

And "existence" is always understood in terms of possibility: "to be itself or not itself."<sup>22</sup> Dasein "decides" its own existence whether by active or passive modes, and since this is the case, its mode of existence Heidegger terms "existentiell." That is to say, its existence is decided without an express

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18. p. 31.

21. p. 32.

19. p. 32.

22. p. 33.

20. p. 32.



understanding of Being beyond the vague pre-understanding which is pre-ontological. It determines its existence, then, solely in the atmosphere, so to speak, of ontical phenomena, in the atmosphere of concrete, existing "beings."

In contrast to an "existentiell" grasp of existence, there is that which stands over it, or apart from it, so to speak, to a degree sufficient to permit an appreciation of the existentiell as an "ontical" affair. This larger grasp of existence is an "existential" or ontological, grasp. It is this latter which characterizes an attempt to analyse an existentiell relation to Being in order to arrive at a provisional concept of Being which is sufficient to permit some explication of its meaning. This analysis which Heidegger is proposing, then, is to be an existential analysis of the existentiell activities of Dasein.<sup>23</sup>

Thus, we arrive at what Heidegger terms "the ontico-ontological priority" of Dasein, though this demonstration has been only provisional.<sup>24</sup> The task which lies before us, if we are to tackle the question of Being and its meaning, is "the radicalization of an essential tendency-of-Being."<sup>25</sup> But this will not be easy. Peculiar problems arise at the outset. For example, because of Dasein's "ontico-ontological priority," the Dasein

23. We pose the matter in this way so as to make clear at the outset the stance which Heidegger will later term "ex-sistence." Ex-sistence stands in a pro- or prior-position relative to existence. It is this stance which "enables" (Seinkönnen), i.e. makes possible, ontology and its "objectification" of Dasein. It is "future" to the objectified Dasein and its existence; hence, ex-sistence and its temporal realm will be deemed pre-eminent over the realms of the present and past. This will become clear in the chapters to follow.

24. p. 34f.

25. p. 35.

"is ontically 'closest' to itself and ontologically farthest" even though "pre-ontologically it is no stranger." That is to say, the Dasein is very close to itself as an ontic being, indeed, it "is" this being: "we are it, each of us, we ourselves."<sup>26</sup> Yet, this closeness is not "immediate." Now, in interpreting Heidegger here, we would say that there is an interval, a "difference," however slight, which nevertheless constitutes a breach between the Being of Dasein and its ontical existence which lies so close at hand. This "difference" does not readily show itself in such expressions as we commonly use for self-identity, e.g., Heidegger's own: "we are it, each of us, we ourselves." Nevertheless, a "difference" lies in the "are", as a "transitive" verb form, and is captured in the common practise of emphasizing "identity" by means of duplication, e.g., "we ourselves." This interval, then, is what separates the ontic and the ontological, and introduces ambiguity at every turn. This insight is very much premature to the argument, however, as it stands. Indeed, it is based upon the conclusion of the whole existential analysis of Dasein, namely, that temporality grounds the existential-ontological constitution of Dasein, and is the meaning of its Being.<sup>27</sup>

If this interval does indeed separate Being from beings, and our grasp of Being is pre-ontological (ontical, existentiell), then it is quite impossible for us to grasp Being because of its

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26. p. 36.

27. pp. 38 and 488.



"ontological" character. This can be more readily appreciated when cast in temporal terms. We can easily grasp present and past events because they are ontical; they exist. But we do not pretend to be able to grasp the future except as "possibilities," and these we readily distinguish from "realities." Always, then, our grasp of Being is pre-ontological; it is that of possibility, and not of actuality.

What, then, is to be our guide in seeking out the Being of this ontico-ontologically prior being, Dasein? We cannot assume a dogmatic attitude and presume that because we have a vague pre-understanding of Being that it will suffice in leading us to a clearly illumined concept, however plausible and "self-evident" some of the arguments this pre-understanding might provide<sup>might be.</sup> especially since we are so much in the habit of thinking Being as though it were ontical.

The means by which we proceed, will of necessity preclude cherished notions and preconceived ideas of just what Being is. In having chosen Dasein as the object of our investigation, we will have to proceed along the way which this being itself illuminates by "showing" itself "in itself and from itself."<sup>28</sup> And this can only be done by focusing upon Dasein as it is "proximally and for the most part - in its average everydayness," so that a "provisional" analysis can be obtained which may possibly point the way to Being itself.<sup>29</sup>

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28. p. 37.

29. p. 37f.



Heidegger emphasizes here in the Introduction not only the "provisional" and "partial" character of any existential analysis which could be obtained by such means, but he also reiterates the "preparatory" nature of this pursuit.<sup>30</sup> His aim is to work out the meaning of Being in as concrete a way as possible. And this approach through Dasein appears to offer more promise than any other.

Once the preparatory work leads to a firmer grasp of Being, then something like a "philosophical" anthropology could be worked out. But, as with the natural sciences, Being and its meaning are the prior considerations if these derived structures are to have anything like a firm foundation.

Temporality, "as the meaning of the Being of that being which we call Dasein," is to be suggested, and the provisional ontological structures (the existentials) of Dasein will then have to be reinterpreted "as modes of temporality."<sup>31</sup> But even when this is done, we shall not have "the answer to our leading question as to the meaning of Being in general," though some preparation for it shall have been made.

We have come, then, to Heidegger's own special contribution to the history of ontology: his suggestion that time is a primary consideration in apprehending the meaning of Being. Keeping in mind what he has already said about Dasein's pre-

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30. p. 38.

31. p. 38.

ontological understanding of Being, we then relate this insight with another, namely, "that whenever Dasein tacitly understands and interprets something like Being, it does so with time as its standpoint."<sup>32</sup>

"Time must be brought to light - and genuinely conceived - as the horizon for all understanding of Being and for any way of interpreting it. In order for us to discern this, time needs to be explicated primordially as the horizon for the understanding of Being, and in terms of temporality as the Being of Dasein, which understands Being."<sup>33</sup>

That is to say, time must be understood in a way that enables our "ordinary conception of time" to be seen as deriving from the "temporality" that is peculiarly Dasein's.<sup>34</sup>

"Time" has long functioned as an ontological - or rather as an ontical - criterion for naively discriminating various realms of beings. A distinction has been made between 'temporal' beings (natural processes and historical happenings) and 'non-temporal' beings (spatial and numerical relationships). We are accustomed to contrasting the 'timeless' meaning of propositions with the 'temporal' course of propositional assertions. It is also held that there is a 'cleavage' between 'temporal' beings and the 'supra-temporal' eternal, and efforts are being made to bridge this over."<sup>35</sup>

Heidegger goes on to stipulate that in the above citation the term "temporal" always means simply existing (seind) "in time," though this designation is "admittedly" rather "obscure." Nonetheless, it must be distinguished from "being (sein) in time," for this latter "functions as a criterion for distinguishing realms of Being."<sup>36</sup> We will try to make this distinction more lucid. The first phrase (existing "in time") posits time as a being among others, as one of Nature's constitutive elements, perhaps. Whereas, "being in time" suggests an inseparable

32. p. 39.

33. p. 39 (Heidegger's italics).

34. p. 39.

35. p. 39.

36. p. 39.



arable relation between time and Being, and that if Being is not a being, then neither is time. Being and time appear to constitute a unity, and identity, of such a nature that any and all designations of beings are at the same time temporal distinctions. For example, we normally look upon historical "events" as occurrences or happenings "in time," and "date" them according to "public time." Thus is there a line of demarkation between these events and ourselves. We can take them or leave them depending upon their significance. But when historical events are understood as "being in time," there adheres to them something of our own Being, and they are transformed, as it were, from something "over and done with" - relics of a time gone by - to beings which are as much "alive" as we are, in the sense that neither their formulation nor their meaning can be fixed. They are still in flux, as we are in flux. Nor, is it possible ever to "size up" events, however insignificant they may appear to be, and dispose of them once and for all. The significance of every "age" and of all its contemporaries, however nameless they may appear to be, is still an open question, and will remain so as long as human beings exist. At best, all we can do relative to "historical" events (which includes human Dasein) is to maintain an attitude of awe and mutual respect, ascribing to them concern equivalent to that which we maintain towards ourselves, ever endeavoring to protect them (as we protect ourselves) from being "written off" by "historians": judged to be such and so.



We have used "events" in our illustration purposefully. For, Heidegger's concern for "history" is monumental. His researches in the history of philosophy reach back to the very earliest thinkers in our western tradition. And rather than accepting what others have concluded about these men, he has engaged in dialogue with them himself, and has come up with altogether "new" interpretations - to the extent that he has been accused of "violence."<sup>37</sup> His arguments with later interpreters have, as we see them, been geared to reopening the past so as to keep it fluid and of a unity with the present (with its relation to the future). If he castigates later interpreters, he does so because they are so sure of themselves, and of their assessment of the significance of past events.

Nowhere in the history of thought does Heidegger find an intensive study of time and its relation to Being. In consequence, he finds no appreciation for the "fact" that "time ...

"...functions as a criterion for distinguishing realms of Being. Hitherto no one has asked or troubled to investigate how time has come to have this distinctive ontological function, or with what right anything like time functions as such a criterion; nor has anyone asked whether the authentic ontological relevance which is possible for it, gets expressed when 'time' is used in so naively ontological a manner."<sup>38</sup>

Time, it seems, has "acquired this 'self-evident' function on its own, so to speak, and continues to do to this very day."<sup>39</sup> But quite in contrast to this common view of time, Heidegger intends "to show that the central problematic of all ontology

37. See the author's Preface to the Second Edition of Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics, p. xxv.

38. p. 39. 39. p. 39.

is rooted in the phenomenon of time, if rightly seen and rightly explained..."<sup>40</sup>

When Being is "conceived in terms of time," Being itself becomes "temporal" in character.<sup>41</sup> Here Heidegger distinguishes between the common understanding of "temporal" and that which he is to introduce. Thus, he speaks of the "Temporal (with a capital "T" in Macquarrie's translation, temporale in the German) determinateness" of the meaning of Being and its modes and characteristics.<sup>42</sup> We follow suite and designate this new understanding of time as "Time," leaving the small "t" for the common usage insofar as we ourselves are able to distinguish between them.

Heidegger's purpose, then, is to work out the "Temporality of Being" which we take to be synonymous with his previously posed aim: "to work out the question of the meaning of Being and to do so concretely."<sup>43</sup> For, as he says, "In the exposition of the problematic of Temporality the question of the meaning of Being will first be concretely answered."<sup>44</sup>

We find our above illustration and explanation of "being in time" corroborated in what Heidegger asserts about what this new understanding of Being must do. If it does not in effect open up the whole history of thought to the extent that its bounds go all the way back so as to include the "Ancients," then we cannot "learn to conceive the possibilities which the Ancients have made ready for us."<sup>45</sup>

<sup>40</sup>. p. 40 (Heidegger's italics).

<sup>42</sup>. p. 40.

<sup>45</sup>. p. 40.

<sup>43</sup>. p. 19.

<sup>41</sup>. p. 40.

<sup>44</sup>. p. 40.



This "new" understanding of time, as Heidegger puts it, itself becomes "ancient" so as to include these distant relatives, and is not simply a modern-day innovation which will contribute to a characterization of this particular age as distinct from all other ages. Instead of erecting boundaries and capitalizing on "differences," this approach breaks down all such arbitrary demarcations and welds into a unity all that has ever been, is now, and ever shall be.<sup>46</sup>

It follows from what Heidegger has said that if this new approach to Being via Time is worked out, the whole history of ontology will need to undergo reinterpretation in the light of this remarkable development. He speaks, therefore, of the "destruction of the history of ontology,"<sup>47</sup> but with the insight already afforded, we can readily see that it is the "history" that is to be shattered - when this latter is conceived to be a definite form and character. To be sure, Dasein is historical, that is to say, it possesses "historicality;" it occurs or happens "in time." But the implications of its historicality are not necessarily those which have been constituted as "history" by historiographers, whether professional or lay. Or, to put it another way, the "traditional" understanding of existence is not necessarily the only way to interpret it. It may not, for example, give to Dasein sufficient breadth and depth. If it sells Dasein short, then human "life" is not being valued sufficiently high. It is too cheap. Heidegger

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46. In this familiar formula, we underscore the forms of the verb "to be" so as to emphasize Being's activity in all three temporal realms of past, present, and future.

47. p. 41.

maintains that "Dasein 'is' its past after the manner of its Being which, to put it roughly, always 'occurs' from out of its future."<sup>48</sup> Futurity, therefore, adheres to the past in virtue of the latter's origin there, so that the Being of Dasein must always be interpreted in terms not of actualities or realities, but of "possibilities." "Facts," "realities," and "actualities" are, therefore, cut loose from "existence" and this latter is "enabled to be" (can be: Seinkönnen) after the manner of Being itself which is temporal, i.e., future.

The ambiguity here is manifold. On the one hand, Heidegger says that the Dasein "is its past" and that this "past" is "what" Dasein "is," and that the "past" is what Dasein is "ontically," i.e., factually.<sup>49</sup> But, on the other hand, the form which the past takes when it is seen to be constitutive of Being (which is future) is fluid, rather than being static and fixed. In a very real way, then, we see Heidegger to be undercutting and otherwise destroying the "ontical" sources which he needs for a "concrete" working-out of an analysis of Dasein as it factually "is." This ambiguity may account for his having chosen to treat Dasein as it "is" in its "average everydayness." A statistical average is a far safer bet than the analysis of any particular person, but it does not solve the problem of interpreting the individuals whose behavior is thrown into the hopper to be correlated and yield a fictitious "average person." The implications of this problem, however,

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<sup>48</sup>. Sein und Zeit, p. 20; we prefer our own translation here to Macquarrie's, p. 41.

<sup>49</sup>. p. 41.



are softened when we acknowledge that Heidegger seems to be most keenly aware of this problem, and will therefore deal "kindly" with his "object," realizing all the while that he is dealing with "possibility" as over against "actuality." For, of all people, Heidegger is aware of the problem of "historicity" (Historizität) which we interpret to be the thoughtful realization of the impact of tradition upon existence.

When "tradition" becomes the "master" of existence, it does so by concealing, in effect, what it should transmit.<sup>50</sup> Instead of engaging existence in that thoughtful "repetition" wherein it rethinks what is taken for granted in tradition, it passes off "conclusions" as "self-evident" and immune to genuine questioning. Thus are our historical "sources" - the fathers of our culture - concealed from us to the extent that they are merely names, dates, and an abbreviated story which purports to tell "what happened" without ever entering into the substance of the thought involved. Every schoolboy provides ample evidence for the ineffectualness of this approach to history which is really an imposed tradition.

Now, as a clue to the solution of this problem of tradition, Heidegger maintains that...

"Greek ontology and its history ... prove that when Dasein understands either itself or Being in general, it does so in terms of the 'world,' and that the ontology which has

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50. p. 43.

thus arisen has deteriorated to a tradition in which it gets reduced to something self-evident - merely material for reworking, as it was for Hegel."<sup>51</sup>

By this he means that the Greeks had a feeling for the temporal character of Being, which feeling had its effect in establishing the "world" as an expression of totality, wholeness, unity, but without definite limits. The "world" or "Nature" epitomized the "horizon of all possible unity" - the unity and futurity of the present and past. But here is the way that Heidegger himself puts it: When "the basis of the ancient ontology" is interpreted in the light of "the problematic of Temporality," it becomes clear that the ancient way of interpreting the Being of beings is "oriented towards the 'world' or 'Nature' in the widest sense," and that it is in terms of "time" that Being is understood. "Outward" evidence for this is to be seen in the "meaning" which Being had: παρουσία or ούσία (signifying in "ontological-Temporal terms" "presence").<sup>52</sup> That is, the Being of beings was interpreted "in the present mode of time." Man's Being in Plato becomes a "dialectic," but this gives way to a more radical treatment by Aristotle in which the λόγος, i.e., λέγειν, becomes ᾤον: "that simple awareness of something present-at-hand in its sheer presence-at-hand," an interpretation which Parmenides had already used as a guide to the meaning of Being as ούσία.<sup>53</sup>

To be noted, however, is the fact that the Greeks understood the temporality of Being without an acquaintance "with

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51. p. 43.

52. p. 47

53. p. 47f.



the fundamental ontological function of time," or even any understanding of its relation to Being, because they take time to be a "being" amongst other beings.<sup>54</sup>

This ancient ontology became in the Middle Ages "a fixed body of doctrine" enjoying "the peculiar character which the Scholastics gave it," and "traveling the path that leads through the Disputationes metaphysicae of Suarez to the 'metaphysics' and transcendental philosophy of modern times."<sup>55</sup> In short, it hardened into a "tradition."

Kant was "the first and only person" ever to be driven by the phenomena themselves to pursue "the dimension of Temporality," but his was a halting effort at best. Indeed, he "shrinks back" and "takes over Descartes' position quite dogmatically."<sup>56</sup>

Descartes, in turn, had, in "claiming to put philosophy on a new and firm foundation," omitted a determination of "the kind of Being which belongs to the res cogitans, or - more precisely - the meaning of the Being of the 'sum.'"<sup>57</sup> Instead, he "applied the medieval ontology to it in carrying through the fundamental considerations of his Meditationes."<sup>58</sup>

The sum of what Heidegger has indicated here, ever so briefly, is that the ancient ontology, when it became in the Middle Ages "a fixed body of doctrine," had evidently already

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54. p. 48.

57. p. 46.

55. p. 43.

58. p. 46.

56. p. 45.

hardened into a "tradition," the "essential thinking" that went into Greek thought having escaped them. And so has this tradition persisted to this day.

Heidegger's proposed "destruction of the history of ontology" has only a positive intent, namely, to "stake out the positive possibilities of that tradition, and this always means keeping it within its limits."<sup>59</sup> "The question of Being is to have its own history made transparent." That is to say, the hardened tradition must be softened up, and that which it conceals must be brought out into the open.<sup>60</sup> It is the negative aspect of the tradition, then, that is to be destroyed so that we may finally "arrive at those primordial experiences in which we achieved our first ways of determining the nature of Being - the ways which have guided us ever since."<sup>61</sup> Heidegger's intent is to "display" the "birth certificate" of our "basic ontological concepts" and this in a way that permits us to participate, as it were, by means of a "repetition," in that ancient founding thought. Thus will we be brought into a unity with the whole history of ontology in a way that tradition could never accomplish.

"In pursuing this task of destruction with the problem of Temporality as [his] clue," Heidegger intends first to interpret Kant's chapter on the "schematism" in his "Critique of Pure Reason" and his doctrine of time in order to show

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59. p. 44.

60. p. 44.

61. p. 44.



"why Kant could never achieve an insight into the problematic of Temporality."<sup>62</sup> There were two things, Heidegger maintains, which prevented this. "He altogether neglected the problem of Being," and "he failed to provide an ontology with Dasein as its theme." That is, to put it into Kantian jargon, he failed to "give a preliminary ontological analytic of the subjectivity of the subject."<sup>63</sup>

Following Kant, Heidegger would take up Descartes' "cogito sum," and finally, Aristotle's essay on time. These being the "decisive stages" of the history of ontology,<sup>64</sup> he will have effected, "within the framework of this treatise," the destruction of the "ontological tradition," and will have demonstrated that the question of the meaning of Being is one that cannot be avoided.<sup>65</sup>

So much for Heidegger's basic program as he saw it when introducing his "phenomenological" analysis of Dasein as Temporality under the title Being and Time. However, because this "provisional" analysis of Dasein was deemed to be the key access-way to Being, the method of investigation was of extreme importance. Heidegger therefore devotes some little space in his Introduction both to an explanation of "phenomenology" and to its defence as the appropriate methodology. We have already indicated something of the ambiguity inhering in the problem of isolating - not to mention analysing - the "ontical" Dasein in its "average everydayness" when "his-

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62. p. 45.  
65. p. 49.

63. p. 45.

64. p. 44.

tory" is exposed to the light of the Temporality of Being. But we would be ill-advised simply to shrug off either the problem or its "provisional" solution as set forth in the balance of Heidegger's book.

Phenomenological analysis investigates phenomena. It is geared to the maxim "To the things themselves!"<sup>66</sup> One might be tempted here to say, Ah! You see, already you talk in terms of things, that is to say, beings! And you "duplicate" (in "things themselves") in order to emphasize their identity. If they "are" themselves, then their Being is already manifest!

Such a clever little speech, however, overlooks the very important little word "To" which throws an entirely different light on the matter. The maxim says "To the things themselves" - towards them. It is, rather than an optimistic expression of achievement, one of hope and of courage. We press on "towards" the things themselves even though in principle they can never ever be so circumscribed as to be wholly transparent. It takes courage to face insurmountable obstacles with "resolution."

Heidegger expounds only the "preliminary conception of phenomenology."<sup>67</sup> He first characterizes the two components of the larger concept, and then this latter. The Greek word φαίνόμενον derives from the verb φαίνεσθαι meaning "to show

66. p. 50.

67. pp. 50 ff.



itself." A phenomenon is that which "shows itself." Further study reveals the verb's derivation from words like φῶς, light, which further clarify the luminous quality of the noun's revelation. The word "phenomenon" carries the root meaning of "self-revelation."<sup>68</sup> And the phenomena are the "totality" of "what the Greeks sometimes identified simply with τὰ ὄντα (beings)."

But usage has not, as with most words, been altogether consistent. Ambiguity has come onto the scene. Heidegger spends some time in trying to sort out the various nuances which "show themselves" in the various writings in which the word appears. "Phenomenon" can also mean "semblance," that which only "seems" to show itself when in reality it is something else.<sup>69</sup> But these two applications still have an interconnection which rests on the former root-meaning. Only phenomena can make a pretense of showing themselves. When a phenomenon shows itself to be other than what it actually is, it is nevertheless phenomenal because it shows itself to be pretending to show itself. That which it pretends to be, its semblance, is not the phenomenon itself, and therefore is to be distinguished as a "privative modification."

These two terms have nothing to do with "appearance" or "mere appearance." These latter Heidegger equates, for example, with the "symptom of a disease."<sup>70</sup> Say, a headache is real, is a phenomenon, but that doctors discover that it is

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68. p. 51.

69. p. 51.

70. p. 51f.

but a symptom of a malady which hitherto had not ~~s~~hown itself. Was this disease giving the "appearance" of a headache? When indeed the doctor discovers the disease, which has as one of its symptoms a headache, he has in fact discovered the disease itself. Prior to this "discovery," however, there was no connection between the headache and the disease, and consequently no "appearance." Yet, the term "appearance" is used in this sense. Something is said to give the appearance, say, of a headache. When so used, however, we are actually saying that we suspect that there is more than meets the eye, but in fact have not seen it. Hence, "appearance" refers to "something which does not show itself." "All indications, presentations, symptoms, and symbols have this basic formal structure of appearing, even though they differ among themselves."<sup>71</sup> An "appearance," then, is not a phenomenon because the latter has not shown itself. Our headache was not the "appearance" of a deeper malady until its connection had been shown. Thus, retrospect may "call" it an "appearance," but its correct designation would be "semblance."

We have, we believe, clarified an obscurity in this passage by means of a "temporal" analytic. The obscurity in Heidegger's presentation rests in his "static" interpretation of "appearance" when giving the example of a symptom. He tries to say that the disease was "announcing itself in the symptom," and that in so doing, it was not showing itself, and

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71. p. 52.



therefore was not really announcing itself. It was, as he puts it, "the announcing-itself of something which does not show itself, but which announces itself through something which does show itself."<sup>72</sup> We contend that this formula is a static rendering of what can only be shown in a temporal form. Only hindsight, that is, only after the disease has become manifest (and therefore a phenomenon) can it be said to have given an appearance of something while at the same time failing to show itself. We cannot have it both ways - not even by hyphenating "announcing-itself," and pawning it off as the action of something which has not shown itself.

There is, however, a legitimate relation between phenomenon and appearance. If a phenomenon shows itself, it thereby makes its appearance. When used in this way, appearance refers directly to the phenomenon itself and thereby accords with its root meaning. Only in this sense is a phenomenon also, and at the same time, an appearance.<sup>73</sup>

According to Heidegger, Kant uses the term "appearance" for the "objects of empirical intuition." These latter are genuine phenomena, yet they are said to "hide" "the things-in-themselves," and therefore are "appearances." That which is purported to lie "behind" the phenomenon and which therefore renders it an appearance Heidegger contends "can" be brought to show themselves and thereby become phenomenal. "For manifestly space and time must be able to show themselves in this

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72. p. 52.

73. p. 53.

way."<sup>74</sup>

We must recall that this Introduction was written some time before others of his works, and therefore discount a certain bravado in what he says here. Though technically there is nothing wrong, the implication seems to be that of expectancy: he expects to reveal the "phenomenon" of time, for example. This, however, may be a matter of subjective interpretation. What he says explicitly is that these underlying "things-in-themselves" can be brought to show themselves, and "can" clearly indicates "possibility" as over against "actuality." As will be seen below, we interpret Heidegger to infer in later works that this future realm of possibility, instead of being phenomenal, is, rather, Nothing, and that Nothing grounds the phenomena. Because of this, it cannot be divorced from them. That is, there is an Identity with Nothing as well as Difference. The future retains sufficient hold on all that "comes into being" that, in a sense, these phenomena are still coming into being, and therefore have not fully revealed themselves as they "are" in "themselves." "Can" time ever become a phenomenon and still be future?

In spite of this and the few other problems which appear along the way, we are wont to endorse the main thrust of Heidegger's work, especially where it impinges upon our theme. Let us, then, move on to his concept of the second component of phenomenology, namely, the Logos. This concept has many

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<sup>74</sup>. p. 55.



"competing significations" in Plato and Aristotle, none of which usurps the prior place. Or, so it seems, at least, until we take hold of the "primary content."<sup>75</sup> This content requires more than is involved when "discourse" means so many things, viz., "reason," "judgment," "concept," "definition," "ground," and "relation." That "discourse" which holds the "primary content" "makes manifest what one is 'talking about' in one's discourse." Aristotle explicates this function of discourse in his term ἀποφάνεσθαι from which our term "apophantic" derives. Here λόγος "lets something be seen" (φαίνεσθαι) ἀπό...: that is, from that which is being talked about, i.e., the phenomenon. "Genuine" discourse draws everything that is said from the phenomenon under discussion.<sup>76</sup> And in so doing, it enables not only the speaker, but listeners as well, to "see" "what" is being talked about. "What" is said accords with "what" is talked about when the discourse is rooted in the λόγος as ἀποφανσις.

"When fully concrete," discourse has the "character" of "vocal proclamation in words." "The λόγος is φωνή, ...- an utterance in which something is sighted in each case."<sup>77</sup>

And precisely "because the function of the λόγος as ἀποφανσις lies in letting something be seen by pointing it out, can the λόγος have the structure of πρόθεσις. The προν-, here, has "a purely apophantic signification" which means that it aims at an identity between what is talked about and the dis-

75. p. 55.

76. p. 56.

77. p. 56.

course itself. It aims at seeing something as something.<sup>78</sup>

Heidegger now introduces the connection between the Λόγος and ἀλήθεια, the "truth." The truth of the Λόγος rests in its capacity as λέγειν to dis-close, to reveal, to un-cover, to dis-cover what it speaks about.<sup>79</sup> And falsehood consists in covering up or otherwise hiding what is truly there, and disclosing in its place what is not there. Hence, the Λόγος itself is not the primary "locus" of truth. Indeed, αἴσθησις, "the sheer sensory perception of something, is 'true' in the Greek sense," and is more primordial than the Λόγος.<sup>80</sup> "Pure νοεῖν is the perception of the simplest determinate ways of Being which beings, as such, may possess." The νοεῖν never covers up; it is "true" in the purest sense. The least that it can be is a non-perceiving ἄννοεῖν, lacking straightforward access.<sup>81</sup> Both ἀννοεῖν (in the sense of letting something lie before us as it is in itself) and νοεῖν (as the careful taking-in of what is there to take in) are more primary than the Λόγος which contains these two. And taken together, they give to the Λόγος its distinctive and proper meaning.<sup>82</sup> This becomes evident as we consider now the "preliminary conception of phenomenology" and the way the terms "phenomenon" and "logos" fit together.

78. p. 56.

79. p. 56f.

80. p. 57.

81. p. 57.

82. A much fuller explication of the terms νοεῖν and ἀννοεῖν and their relation to the Λόγος appears in Was heisst Denken?, Niemeyer, Tübingen, 1954. No less are we indebted to G. J. Seidel (Martin Heidegger and the Pre-Socratics, U. of Neb. Press, Lincoln, 1964) for his lucid treatment in this regard. Cf. esp. pp. 79-82.



Heidegger immediately points to an "inner relation between the things meant by these terms," a relation which we have tried to suggest as we went along. The expression "phenomenology," he says, "may be formulated in Greek as ἀφαινεῖν τὰ φαινόμενα."<sup>83</sup> And he says that ἀφαινεῖν means ἀποφαινέσθαι. When we incorporate these terms, we arrive at something like this: to let that which lies before us as it is in itself be seen as it is by means of vocal expression. This formula we take to be the "basic" meaning of the term λόγος, no less than it is of the combined form "phenomenology" - and no less than it is the meaning of the term "hermeneutic," i.e., exegesis.

We can see, then, why Heidegger says that phenomenology has as its maxim, "To the things themselves!" As a "method" of investigation, it neither characterizes nor designates the "what" of its subject-matter. All that is involved is a "how": "how" it moves towards the things themselves. Phenomenological investigation has as its purpose to reveal, to discover, to take the wraps off what is there to be seen as it is. The results of its investigation are descriptions of phenomena. Hence, a phenomenon is something hidden, or covered up. It has not been seen already, or if it has, it somehow becomes concealed again.<sup>84</sup> The aim of phenomenological research is to disclose the "Being of beings," the phenomena themselves as they "are." And Heidegger here reiterates his thesis: that Being has been covered up for a long, long time; it has been

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<sup>83</sup>. p. 58.

<sup>84</sup>. p. 59.

"forgotten," a case of being wholly oblivious of it (Seinsvergessenheit).

"Phenomenology is our way of access to what is to be the theme of ontology, and it is our way of giving it demonstrable precision. Only as phenomenology is ontology possible. In the phenomenological conception of 'phenomenon,' what one has in mind as that which shows itself, is the Being of beings, its meaning, its modifications and derivatives."<sup>85</sup>

And "behind" the phenomena of phenomenology there is nothing. But what lies on this side of them is sufficient to obscure them - even to the point of total obliteration.<sup>86</sup> We interpret Heidegger to be saying here that in a certain sense, there is but one phenomenon: Being itself; and that the multiplicity of so-called phenomena are the means of moving towards this one, true phenomenon.<sup>87</sup> It is the One: the one which applies to the Many and bestows upon them their unity as individuals. But until it is revealed wholly, they are fated to partial obscurity.<sup>88</sup> If this is a fair interpretation, then Heidegger's correlation of Being with Time, and his question as to whether Time is the horizon of Being or not,<sup>89</sup> accords perfectly, and puts into perspective these lesser "phenomena" which have so puzzled us with their relativity, their transience, their "historical" revelation. For, is it not "history" that suggests that without question the phenomena

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85. p. 60.

86. In the "Humanismusbrieve" \*Heidegger says that it was out of the "experience" of the oblivion of Being that Being and Time was undertaken. Cf. p. 17.

87. In this sense, "time" could be called a "phenomenon."

88. This is not "eschatological," for, in principle, complete revelation is impossible because existence is limited by time.

89. Cf. p. 488.

\*Über den Humanismus, Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt, 1947



towards which phenomenology moves in an effort to reveal them as they are, to reveal them in their Being, are "hidden"? And because they are hidden, Being is also?

Heidegger suggests that there are several ways in which the phenomena can be hidden: They can be as yet undiscovered: neither known or unknown. They can be covered-over, buried, forgotten, ignored. They can also be all but obscured so that only a "semblance" remains. Here the possibilities for deceiving are enormous and stubborn.<sup>90</sup> Say, for example, that "a phenomenological concept is drawn from primordial sources." If it is communicated "in the form of an assertion," it will more than likely degenerate and be covered-over, and lost. Assertions, it seems, cannot represent primal truth. "The difficulty of this kind of research lies in making it self-critical in a positive sense."<sup>91</sup>

As to its "subject-matter," phenomenology aims at revealing the Being of beings. It is ontology. We have seen how Heidegger has narrowed down the field of possible "subjects" to the one for which Being is an issue, namely, Dasein. And we have discussed the "method" to be used. Does it not follow, then, that phenomenology, as a method of investigation, is "interpretation"? It "is a hermeneutic in the primordial signification of this word." And to the extent that this "provisional" and "preliminary" interpretation will shed light on those beings which are not Dasein, it "also becomes a 'hermen-

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90. p. 60.

91. p. 61.

eutic' in the sense of working out the conditions in which the possibility of any ontological investigation depends."<sup>92</sup> But there is yet a third sense in which the phenomenology of Dasein is a hermeneutic, and one which is "philosophically primary." And that is as "an analytic of the existentiality of existence."<sup>93</sup>

This latter point needs explanation. If all beings are said to exist, but the structure of Dasein's existence is such that "history" is its significant characteristic, then an analysis (interpretation) of its existence should shed light on the existence of all other beings because their existence is tainted with a distinctly "historical" flavor, namely, relativity. This latter problem may have provided the initial impulse to seek a solution, so dominant has the place of science been in western culture, but if a solution is to be found, it must be by a route other than that which science has taken. For, science is able only to confound and compound the problem. Now, this correlation of the methodology of science with that of phenomenology demonstrates the necessity of an existential analysis of Dasein. Furthermore, it explains Heidegger's recurring polemic against "technique," "calculation," and "measurement" so distinctively characteristic of science.<sup>94</sup>

"Being, as the basic theme of philosophy, ... pertains to every being." Yet, "Being and its structure lie beyond every being and every possible character which a being may possess."

92. p. 62.

93. p. 62.

94. Cf., e.g., the essay, "What is Metaphysics?" in Existence and Being, esp. pp. 356ff.



"Being is the 'transcendens' pure and simple. And the transcendence of Dasein's Being is distinctive in that it implies the possibility and the necessity of the most radical individuation. Every disclosure of Being as the transcendens is transcendental knowledge. Phenomenological truth (the disclosedness of Being) is 'veritas transcendentalis.'"<sup>95</sup>

Thus is philosophy to be seen as "universal phenomenological ontology." As such, "what is essential in it does not lie in its actuality," but in its possibility. "We can understand phenomenology only by siezing upon it as a possibility."<sup>96</sup>

After a fitting apology for the "awkwardness and inelegance" of his expressions in the analysis to follow, Heidegger proceeds to end this Introduction with an outline of the task ahead of him. We should note that the whole work, as outlined, was never finished in the formal sense. Indeed, Being and Time, as published, constituted but two-thirds of the first half, even though the first six editions of the German text carried the designation "First Half."<sup>97</sup> As outlined here in the Introduction, "Part One" was to be "the Interpretation of Dasein in terms of temporality, and the explication of time as the transcendental horizon for the question of Being" - both aspects of which we have found discussed in the Introduction. When broken down, "Part One" was to have three divisions: 1. "The preparatory fundamental analysis of Dasein; 2. Dasein and temporality; and 3. Time and Being." Obviously, the published portion consists of divisions 1. and 2. only.

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95. p. 62.

96. p. 63.

97. In the "Author's Preface to the Seventh German Edition," p. 17.

"Part Two" was to constitute the "basic features of a phenomenological destruction of the history of ontology, with the problem of Temporality as our clue." When broken down, it too was to have three divisions: "1. Kant's doctrine of the schematism and time, as a preliminary stage in a problematic of Temporality; 2. the ontological foundation of Descartes' 'cogito sum;' and how the medieval ontology has been taken over into the problematic of the 'res cogitans;' and 3. Aristotle's essay on time, as providing a way of discriminating the phenomenal basis and the limits of ancient ontology."<sup>98</sup>

Now, when we see Heidegger's own brief summaries of Parts One and Two, it is readily apparent that "time" and "Temporality" are his prime interests despite the fact that he has always to deal with beings and their interpretation. We have already seen why he must focus upon beings for a glimpse of Being, but we have yet to discover in full, and in detail, why he cannot simply take up "time" as a "phenomenon" - if Time is indeed his concern. For an answer to this that goes beyond the brief suggestions we have already made, the reader will have to read on. We find that time is treated in a pivotal way in Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics, an analysis of which follows next. And in the subsequent chapters as well we shall find time to be a determining consideration. So that by the time we shall have examined in some detail but five works (in addition to this Introduction), we shall have accumulated

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<sup>98</sup> p. 64f.



enough insight into Heidegger's understanding of Time to enable us to draw conclusions which, to be sure, will be provisional, but firm enough, nonetheless, to warrant consideration. For, our purpose, let us repeat, is provisional: to see if further investigations along these lines are worth the time that they would "take."

Someone will ask, Why do you not treat the analysis which is to follow here in Being and Time? For better or worse, we contend that it does not warrant such in this treatise because it is too "preliminary." We are already assuming, at the outset, not the details of Heidegger's existential analysis, but rather his general conclusions, namely, that the meaning of the Being of Dasein lies in Temporality. We are not sure that "Sein-zum-Tod," for example, is the best way to explicate Dasein's tendency to interpret his own being as a unity. "Unity" itself could have been analysed as the peculiarly temporal signification by which Dasein interprets his own and the Being of the things-at-hand; and this as an extension of the concept of "totality" by which the "world" is constituted. For, does not unity make its appearance solely from within the sphere of historicity as the "ownmost" possibility which can belong to beings? But this is a moot point! Heidegger does not say that his analysis is the best that could be made, and over and over again he stresses its provisional character. We see no point in quarreling over such relativities.

Our task as we have seen it has been to press on with Heidegger into further basic phenomenological analyses which probe more deeply than those in *Being and Time*. For, in the end, will not all phenomenological analyses be "of" Dasein whether explicit or implicit? We have chosen the Kantbook because it takes up Kant's Critique of Pure Reason and its concern for "laying the foundation for ontology." We have chosen The Essence of Ground, "What is Metaphysics?" and "The Essence of Truth" for similar "basic" researches. Our final choice, Identität und Differenz, follows upon all that goes before it and helps to tie it together. It also has a peculiarly "theological" significance which serves to bring the whole discussion around to our starting point, and complete our study. For our part, these five works are enough of a unity in themselves to constitute the scope of this treatise, yet are representative of Heidegger's whole thought through the years, so that by assuming the backdrop of Being and Time in its general configurations (as suggested in the Introduction), we end with a fair sampling of the total considerable literature through 1957, and thus meet Martin Heidegger, the philosopher. But as to the legitimacy of this procedure, the reader himself will have to decide. Let us press on, then, to lay the foundation of ontology.



## Chapter III

## "Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics"

## 1. Introductory

Heidegger's Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics<sup>1</sup> first appeared in 1929, but prior to publication, this "interpretation" of Kant "in its essentials" was presented "in a four-hour course" given in the winter of 1925-26. It was repeated in 1928, and again in March, 1929.<sup>2</sup> By the time the unaltered Second Edition was published in 1950, Heidegger's critics had had time to speak "reproachfully" of the "violence" of his interpretation.<sup>3</sup> We wonder, however, if these critics were themselves violent in their interpretation of this book, for it was the author's intent that it should be a portion of "the second part of Being and Time."<sup>4</sup> That is, it is a crucial first step in the "destruction of the history of ontology" and should, therefore, be criticised relative to this entire history, and not, as might be the case, according to favored interpretations of Kant, and quite apart from this history. Heidegger's "Kantbook" is a fundamental first blow dealt this entire history. It is fundamental because Kant is the first thinker in that history to discern that ontology is a problem.<sup>5</sup> And it is a blow because Heidegger points out how Kant failed to achieve its solution.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Translated by James S. Churchill; Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1962; hereafter referred to only by page number.

2. Author's Preface to First Edition, p. xxiii.

3. Author's Preface to Second Edition, p. xxv.

4. p. xxiii.

5. p. 16.

6. p. 166ff.

The traditional concept of metaphysics which Kant inherited contained, according to Heidegger, a "peculiar" albeit a "necessary ambiguity."<sup>7</sup> The term "metaphysics" had arisen "as the collective name for those treatises of Aristotle which were classified as following those belonging to the 'Physics'."<sup>8</sup> His "Physics" were descriptive of Nature (φύσις) as apprehended in "experience," whereas "metaphysics" was descriptive of what Aristotle considered to be πρώτη φιλοσοφία.<sup>9</sup> "First philosophy" considered both "beings as such (ὅν ἢ ὅν) and the "highest sphere of beings (πρωτότατον γένος) through which the being in totality (the Being of beings) is defined."<sup>10</sup> Hence, "first philosophy" centers upon this ambiguous relation between Being and beings.

And "'metaphysics' remains the title of a fundamental philosophical difficulty."<sup>11</sup> In post-Aristotelian philosophy, metaphysics was organized around this basic ambiguity. "The devout Christian interpretation" designated as "creatures" all that was not divine, "the totality of creatures defining the universe."<sup>12</sup> This totality had two main divisions: Nature and Man. Together with God, then, the totality of all "beings" had three divisions, and their studies were termed Cosmology, Psychology, and Theology. These three constituted metaphysica specialis, a discipline to be distinguished somehow, as in Aristotelian thought, from metaphysica generalis (ontology) which had as its object Being in general,<sup>13</sup> or to

7. p. 10.

8. p. 10f.

9. p. 11

10. p. 12

11. p. 12.

12. p. 13.

13. p. 13.



all three divisions of the former.

As it developed through the years, metaphysica generalis became known as the "queen of the sciences" not only because Being in general was applicable to and somehow undergirded all three divisions of metaphysica specialis, but also because its methodology corresponded to mathematics: "perfectly rigorous," "absolutely binding," and "free from the contingencies of experience." In the strictest sense, ontology is "rational and a priori, i.e., it is a pure, rational science."<sup>14</sup> It was precisely because cosmology, psychology and theology depended so much on "experience" with its subjective contingencies, and therefore yielded "incoherence" and "ineffectualness," that Kant sought in ontology the necessary basis or ground upon which to build an absolutely coherent metaphysica specialis: his primary interest. Hence, ontology, the study of Being in general, became for him "true metaphysics."<sup>15</sup>

With his attention now focused upon ontology, Kant observes that hitherto "its method has been merely a random groping, and what is worst of all, a groping among mere concepts."<sup>16</sup> It "lacks a binding proof of its alleged insights."<sup>17</sup> What constitutes the "inner possibility" of its being what it claims to be, namely, "first philosophy," the "queen of the sciences"? This question heightens the "ambiguity" between

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<sup>14</sup>. p. 13.

<sup>15</sup>. p. 14.

<sup>16</sup>. Here and in all subsequent Kantian quotations, we abbreviate his name (K.), cite first or second edition (A or B), and follow with page numbers; e.g., this citation: K. Bxv. This Kantian reference is then followed by the page in our text: p. 14.

<sup>17</sup>. p. 14.

beings-as-such which are experienced, and that in which they all participate, namely, Being in general, a phenomenon which itself does not appear as a "being," and therefore is not an object of experience. Obviously, the matter of our behavior or comportment (Verhalten) relative to the beings which "are" is the problem here, but how to approach it?

Kant appears to have taken his clue from "science."<sup>18</sup> The "scientific method" postulates an hypothesis: a possible explanation of observed patterns within Nature. On the basis, then, of a "possible" explanation, experiments are conducted in order to see if Nature conforms to this hypothesis. If so, then this hypothesis becomes a "law" of Nature. No "laws" per se are observable in Nature; they are not encountered as "natural" phenomena. Rather, they are "projected" as "possible" explanations, and simply tested for accuracy. All so-called "laws of Nature" have therefore been projected "prior" to their testing and proof. In a manner of speaking, then, they have been known prior to that experience which proved them. There must therefore be something about our behavior towards beings which has the character of "knowledge a priori." But this would mean that we have "ontological" as well as "ontic" knowledge. Moreover, it would suggest that such "ontic" knowledge as we have, is itself made possible by ontological knowledge.

Thus, both the formulation of the problem as "ambiguous" and this clue from science led Kant to approach ontology as a

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<sup>18</sup>. p. 15.



problem -- the first man so to do.<sup>19</sup> In consequence, "the structure of traditional metaphysics undergoes its first and most profound shock."<sup>20</sup> Kant sees his task to be "to reveal the internal possibility of ontology," to show how it is possible to have any "ontic" knowledge at all.<sup>21</sup> This means that he must demonstrate that the human mind has certain faculties which "determine" something about "objects" prior to their being given in experience, which determination is essential to experiential apprehension, i.e., makes it possible. Therefore, since ontic knowledge has traditionally been termed "acts of synthetic judgment," his investigation of ontological knowledge will interrogate acts of synthetic judgment a priori. And since "reason" has traditionally been the faculty which supplies the principles of judgment, Kant will interrogate "pure" reason, that is, reason deprived of empirical data.<sup>22</sup> By such means, he intends to "lay the foundation" - in the sense of "architectural" construction<sup>24</sup> - from which can arise an unshakeable metaphysica specialis: Cosmology, Psychology, and Theology.<sup>25</sup>

## 2. Characteristics of Human Knowledge.

In order to interrogate "pure" reason, it will be necessary to enter hitherto unexplored recesses of the human mind, to move in the direction of a continuing regression to the

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19. p. 16.

23. p. 19.

20. p. 16.

24. p. 4.

21. p. 17.

25. p. 21.

22. p. 185.

ultimate root of all knowledg. It is to be noted that Heidegger, in this interpretation of Kant's Critique, follows him in his "characterization of the dimension" within which this interrogation is to be made. But Kant, it seems, characterizes the "essential attributes" of this dimension as "self-evident presuppositions."<sup>26</sup> Heidegger prefers to treat them less lightly.

The "finitude" of human reason is discussed first. Finitude "by no means consists merely and primarily in the fact that human knowledge exhibits many shortcomings: that it is unstable, inexact, liable to error, and so on."<sup>27</sup> Rather, finitude here refers to the "mode" by which "knowledge may relate to objects,"<sup>28</sup> to the mode of "intuition" (Anschauung). This mode is fundamentally dependent upon something that is offered; it is receptive; it gains all its material from an "immediate" relation.

As a term at once definitive for all "human" knowledge, "finitude" emphasizes the priority of intuition over "thought" and "imagination," however much these latter may, in the course of the argument appear to gain ascendancy over intuition. It is finite human reason that is to be interrogated, whether it be based on empirical or upon a priori reception of its object.

Intuition, then, is "primary" cognition.<sup>29</sup> Thought, on the other hand, rather than being primary, is always "at the service of intuition."<sup>30</sup> That which thought and intuition

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26. p. 27.

27. p. 27.

28. p. 28.

29. p. 28.

30. p. 28.



share in common is their mutual capacity to "represent." Now, representation "is characterized by an awareness that something announces itself and is announced."<sup>31</sup> In empirical knowledge, for instance, "something" announces itself by being "there." Awareness of its "being-there" is its "intuition" - in this case, a "sensible" intuition - and recognition of "its-being-there" is the conceptual grasp of its relation to other things similar to it. Here, primary intuition is active in representing to thought this "single" intuition. Thought, in turn, relates this "particular" to the "generality" and in this "representation" makes possible its recognition as something "known." In this distinction between the "particular" and "general," we have thought's contribution to knowledge, i.e., "conceptual" thought: the relation of the One to the Many. Every finite intuition is "single" (particular) and must somehow be related to previous intuitions. Without primary intuition, however, conceptual thought would have nothing to relate.<sup>32</sup>

At this point, "the essence of finite human knowledge is elucidated by contrasting it with the idea of infinite, divine knowledge, i.e., 'intuitus originarius'"<sup>33</sup>.<sup>34</sup> Divine knowledge, it seems, is also "intuitive" knowledge. But as "divine," it cannot be "dependent" upon an object as is the case with "finite" knowledge. So, infinite knowledge, "in the act of intuition, first creates the object of intuition as such."<sup>35</sup> Or, as Heidegger puts it, "seeing right through the thing in advance, such cognition intuitively it immediately and has no need of

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31. p. 28.

34. p. 28.

32. p. 28f.

35. K. B139, p. 29.

33. K. B72, p. 28.

thought. Thought as such, then, is in itself the seal of finitude."<sup>36</sup> The precise character of finite intuition is such that it must be a thinking intuition. And it is in this qualification (as thinking) that the distinction between finite and infinite knowledge is caught.<sup>37</sup>

Finite intuition "is not able to give itself an object. It must let this object be given."<sup>38</sup> This means that finite intuition is "derivative" or "receptive,"<sup>39</sup> and therefore dependent upon something being given. Hence, finite intuition is "sensible;" organs of "sense" are required. But this should not be construed to mean that finite intuition is dependent upon "sense" organs. Rather, it is finite because "our Dasein is finite." The senses merely communicate such intimations as are given by the things around us.<sup>40</sup> Sense organs "serve" intuition, not vice versa. This being the case, the way is left open for "the possibility of a non-empirical sensibility,"<sup>41</sup> or, less obscurely, for the possibility of the "pure" intuition of, say, time and space.

We have already alluded to the role of thought in knowledge: how it relates particular intuitions to the many. This process also accounts for the "generality" of knowledge, i.e., its communicability. Now, once the relation of the particular to the general is effected, a "judgment" has been rendered. That is, something has been asserted about the single intuition. What? Precisely this: that what has been intuited relates in some way to the many. This kind of judgment is termed "predication."

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36. p. 29.

37. p. 29.

38. p. 30.

39. K. B72, p. 31

40. p. 31.

41. p. 32.



Two other types are possible. That which connects the subject to the predicate in some way is termed "apophantic;" and that which asserts that this connection is "true" is called "veritative." Perhaps these should be illustrated. A particular intuition is declared to be "a dog:" plainly a generality, a concept, and an instance of "predication." To say that "I see a dog" is to connect the subject with the predicate: an instance of "apophantic discourse." But to say "That dog is rabid" is to make an assertion that can either be true or false: a veritative synthesis.

Since all three of these judgments will always involve the relation of a single intuition with the many, they can be said to be "synthetic," that is, they effect a new relation.<sup>42</sup> Hence, they effect a unity: the relation itself. Thus, we can speak of this unifying action, this conceptual correlation, as "synthetic judgment" whether it is predicative, apophantic, or veritative. According to Heidegger, this synthesis is said to "constitute the essence of finite knowledge."<sup>43</sup>

With this break-down of the types of judgments which can be made, we can see that it is only the predicative synthesis which utilizes an "external" intuition. The apophantic judgment relates to the subject the predicate how already "given" in the prior predicative synthesis; and the veritative, in turn, relates these two. In other words, once a "finite" intuition is made, a synthesis (something not "external") based on it can

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<sup>42</sup>. p. 33.

<sup>43</sup>. p. 34.

now itself be related, and a new synthesis made, and so on, each "new" synthesis presenting itself within - wholly independent of empirical intuition. This means that the synthesizing capacity of "finite" thought can be termed "infinite" in that it "creates" "things," e.g., relations.

Infinite knowledge, it has been said, cannot be "dependent" upon some ontic thing.

"Absolute cognition itself reveals a being in the act of letting it come forth (entstehen lassen), and possesses it 'only' as that which arises from this very act, i.e., as e-ject (Entstand). Insofar as a being is manifest to absolute intuition, it 'is' precisely in its coming-into-Being. It is the being as thing-in-itself, i.e., not as object."<sup>44</sup>

This somewhat obscure passage intends to pinpoint the precise character of infinite intuition as in no wise to be understood as producing or creating its own "objects." For, "objects," strictly speaking, only "exist" for finite intuition: that kind of intuition which must have "objects" in order itself to exist "as such."<sup>45</sup> We might put the matter this way: finite intuition is not content with a being's mere "coming-into-Being;" it must "be" now; it must already be wholly manifest. Is the distinction here a fine one? For our purposes, it is elucidated most easily in "historical" terms. "Coming-into-Being" is a fluid concept. The precise "definition" of what is now only "coming-into-Being" has not yet been fully revealed. In consequence, it cannot now be known "as such," as fully revealed.<sup>46</sup> An "object," on the other hand, is "historical" in the sense that its definition has already been established. It is fully known now.

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<sup>44</sup>. p. 36.

<sup>45</sup>. p. 36f.

<sup>46</sup>. p. 38.



Infinite intuition, therefore, is presently-acting-intuition; it is intuiting now. "What" it is intuiting now, cannot be determined until it has been fully intuited. And when that will be is still future.

Kant's "thing-in-itself" is thus to be understood as only-now-coming-into-Being and therefore unknowable "as such."<sup>47</sup> Its "appearance," however, is not to be interpreted dynamically, but in a temporally static way, in terms of "moments," a sequence of "now's." To finite intuition, it "is," in any given moment, an "object" of some sort, and it is distinct, manifest, and present.<sup>48</sup>

To be sure, we have introduced "temporal" distinctions into this discussion, something neither Kant nor Heidegger has done. Without them, however, the obscurity of the passage is such that a reader may find comprehension virtually impossible. Thoughts like this, for example, abound: "behind the appearance" is the "thing-in-itself" which is not accessible to finite knowledge.<sup>49</sup> Dare we ask, How, then, is it known to be there? The difficulties such a non-temporal presentation makes are manifold, and, to a degree pointless, in view of the fact that time is to play such a major role in the balance of the argument. The "temporal" clue is given anyway in the idea of "coming-into-Being," and needs only slight elaboration in order to lay bare the essential distinctions which we have made.

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<sup>47</sup>. p. 38.

<sup>48</sup>. p. 38.

<sup>49</sup>. p. 38.

We are approaching by this analysis the "field of origin," the dimension of the regression necessary in order to lay bare the root of knowledge. It is appropriate to take stock. Emphasis has been heavily laid upon that one aspect which characterizes all human knowledge: its finitude. With this aspect firmly in mind, we can summarize, or rather, let Kant do it for us:

"Our knowledge springs from two fundamental sources of the mind; the first is the capacity of receiving representations (receptivity for impressions), the second is the power of knowing an object through these representations (spontaneity in the production of concepts)."<sup>50</sup>

Finite intuition, then, and thought, which serves it, are the two "fundamental sources."

But what is the origin of these "sources," and of the unity which they comprise, i.e., finite human knowledge?

"By way of introduction or anticipation we need only say that there are two stems of human knowledge, namely, sensibility and understanding, which perhaps spring from a common, but to us unknown, root. Through the former, objects are given to us; through the latter, they are thought."<sup>51</sup>

Heidegger cites this passage from Kant in order to indicate not only the direction to be taken, but also that Kant says that the "root" is "to us unknown." Heidegger's interpretation is to be an investigation of all the clues that Kant nevertheless gives about this "unknown" root. His findings will carry him beyond Kant in bringing out into the open what Kant started to uncover but failed finally to do. Later, Heidegger will characterize Kant's reaction as a "recoil."<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>. K. A50, B74, p. 40.  
<sup>52</sup>. See pp. 166ff.

<sup>51</sup>. K. A15, B29, p. 41.



### 3. The Way in which the "Root" is to be Revealed

It has been stated that the clue from science suggests the possibility of founding, or grounding, metaphysics if it can be shown that an a priori synthesis makes possible the reception of beings as objects of intuition. But how can finite intuition intuit objects before they are given empirically, without being their creator?<sup>53</sup> This is the question of an "ontological" synthesis, of bringing forth the Being of a thing prior to its apprehension as being "there."<sup>54</sup> It is a question of "pre-ontological" knowledge, of the knowledge of "Being" prior to the knowledge of particular beings.

If this investigation of the possibility of ontological knowledge a priori is to be undertaken, then it must concentrate on what Kant terms "pure" reason, i.e., "pure" thought and "pure" intuition. Accordingly, this investigation will proceed through five stages: "(1) the essential elements of pure knowledge; (2) the essential unity of pure knowledge; (3) the intrinsic possibility of the essential unity of the ontological synthesis; (4) the ground of the intrinsic possibility of the ontological synthesis; and (5) the complete determination of the essence of ontological knowledge."<sup>55</sup>

The character of this investigation is that of an "analytic," a term which "signifies a 'dissolution' which loosens and lays bare the seeds of ontology. It reveals those conditions

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<sup>53</sup>. p. 43.

<sup>54</sup>. p. 43.

<sup>55</sup>. p. 44.

from which springs an ontology as a whole according to its intrinsic possibility."<sup>56</sup> "It is that which 'reason produces entirely out of itself.'"<sup>57</sup> The "way," then, is an analysis of "pure" reason.

#### 4. The First Stage: The Essential Elements of Pure Reason

The question before us is this: "How must the finite being that we call man be in his inmost essence in order that in general he can be open to beings that he himself is not, which beings must be able to reveal themselves by themselves?"<sup>58</sup> First, we must assume that when finite knowledge is cognition a priori, it must be "pure" intuition, and that pure intuition must therefore be determined by "pure" thought. For, if intuition were to be determined by anything "outside," it would not be "pure" but "empirical." Hence, a quest for "pure" intuition. Are there "pure" intuitions? Kant claims that space and time are.<sup>59</sup>

Space is accorded this designation because no such thing as space exists per se. "Relations of beside, above, and in back of are not localized 'here' or 'there.'"<sup>60</sup> Such spatial relations as these can and do apply "here," "there," and "everywhere" within the realm of "things," but are requisite only to locating them relative to one another. Space is one; all things which exist, do so within this unity of space, yet have no effect whatever upon it. To say that a thing occupies or takes up

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56. p. 46.

59. p. 48.

57. K. Axx, p. 46

60. p. 49.

58. p. 47.



space in no way limits space. It is limitless and continuous, unique and whole, yet is comprised of parts without ever losing its essential unity or totality.<sup>61</sup> The space that separates an electron from its nucleus is the same space that separates the galaxies. Distance measures are not determinations of space, but of "things" in their inter-relations. A child's nightgown, for example, may burn if ignited, but it is not the distance between the gown and a fire that matters, but the flamability of the cloth and the relative temperature of the heat to which it is exposed - both measures of these "things" themselves. Given a "flameproof" gown, there would be no ignition even if contact with a coal fire were immediate.

If, then, space does not exist "as such," that is, cannot itself be isolated and measured, and otherwise limited, if it is unique and whole, yet is composed of parts which have no limiting effect on the totality of space, can we not conclude that it is given as a unique whole at once, and as a whole, in an act of representation? An act of "original" representation which "creates" space?<sup>62</sup> This "original" representation is made in such a way that at the time of an empirical intuition, the object intuited is intuited as already within a spatial context. That is, space is given a priori.<sup>63</sup>

But purely "spatial" representations must have an order to them. That is, should our flammable nightgown come closer and closer to a fire, the mere measurement of the proximities

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61. p. 50.

62. K. A32, B48, p. 50.

63. p. 51.

involved is not enough. These measurements, if not arranged in an order of decreasing distances, would account for little. It must be that each succeeding measurement is less than the former if the "meaning" of the situation is to be grasped. Now, unlike spatial determinations, those which are temporal are not to be found "outside." Time, rather, appears to manifest itself "as a succession of mental states,"<sup>64</sup> a succession of "now's," each of which has its own representations, drives, and moods. As pure succession, however, devoid of thematic representations, time "is 'the form of inner sense, that is, of our intuition of ourselves and of our inner states.'"<sup>65</sup> "Time cannot be a determination of outer appearances; it has to do neither with shape or position."<sup>66</sup> As an "inner" sense, then, time, as with space, appears to be an "original" intuition, a "product" of the mind. Yet, we have seen how "succession" is requisite to making spatial determinations meaningful. Indeed, to speak of spatial determinations (the plural) at all, presupposes a succession of them, so that we begin to see how time is prior to space, i.e., it "takes precedence over space." "As universal pure intuition, it must be the dominant and essential element of pure knowledge" which makes possible a priori each and every appearance of anything whatsoever.<sup>67</sup>

But once time as the dominant "pure" intuition is shown to be an "inner" sense, then the "subjectivity of the subject" must be shown to consist in its being "open," or receptive, to beings outside. Else, this "transcendental aesthetic" will have

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64. p. 51.  
67. p. 52.

65. K. A33, B49, p. 51f.

66. K. A33, B49, p. 50.



accomplished little towards grounding pre-ontological knowledge. If, on the other hand, the subjectivity of the subject can be shown to consist precisely in this attitude of openness to external beings, then the more can it be shown to be free from external limitations.<sup>68</sup> The subjectivity of the subject, then, has now to be examined. That is, the role of pure thought in finite knowledge, i.e., the "transcendental logic," is to be determined.

The other element in finite knowledge is "thought, which as determinative representation, is directed toward what is intuited in intuition, and thus is entirely at the service of the latter."<sup>69</sup> As we have said, thought's contribution to cognition is that both of relating "single" intuitions to the "many" and, by means of "concepts," of determining that which is intuited. Pure cognition, then, would mean "general representation" by means of "pure" concepts. Now, what are "pure" concepts?

"Unity" is a "pure" concept. All of the things which are empirically apprehended in the world are, as such, single units. Each is an example of unity when all but its participation as sheer "unit" is abstracted from it, and we are left with a mathematically pure number: an example of unity. Yet, when taken altogether, these unities themselves comprise a larger unity, but this "totality" is essentially the same as the least of its constituent parts. All are one; each is one. In the case above (in the transcendental aesthetic), it was precisely this charac-

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68. p. 54.

69. p. 55.

teristic of space which led us to conclude that it was not an external phenomenon which can be apprehended "here," "there," and "everywhere," because all spaces are of the same total space. It should now be even more apparent how "unity" is always unity, whether we are considering the least possible unity, or the sum of all such units. Unity is unity, pure and simple, and cannot be qualified in any way so as to destroy its essential integrity as both universal and particular. "Conceptual representation lets the many come to agreement in this one."<sup>70</sup>

In unity, then, we have all that is required of a pure concept. For, if abstracted from whatever phenomena may be in question, this abstraction in no way deprives phenomena of their content. Yet, if the "unity" of a phenomenon is disallowed, it cannot be seen to be phenomenal. "It" does not exist as something separate and distinct. Its Being, it would seem, consists in its integrity as a unit.

The act of reflection (thought) is one of judgment; it is the "determination of something as something."<sup>71</sup> Each such action brings "various representations under one common representation."<sup>72</sup> But "this act of reflective unification is possible only if it is itself guided by a precursory reference to a unity, in the light of which all unification becomes possible."<sup>73</sup> By such means, each and every "representation of unity [would] belong to the essential structure of the fundamental act of understanding."<sup>74</sup> Is this "directive unity" to be found here in

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70. p. 55.

73. p. 57.

71. p. 57.

74. p. 57.

72. K. A66, B93, p. 57.



thought, or must we look for it elsewhere? A summary of this "first stage" will give a preliminary answer to this question and prepare us for the second.

Space and time have been seen to be "pure" intuitions. And now "unity" has been shown to be a "pure" concept: a representation of thought. It was earlier disclosed<sup>75</sup> that thought is always at the service of intuition, but that pure intuition must be determined by thought. Thus, we have a relation between thought and intuition of mutual reciprocity. Yet, finitude requires that intuition be "primary." If the unity of the pure concept were the sole prerogative of the faculty of thought, then its unifying representation would then make possible intuition's "single" intuitions, and thereby reduce it to a subordinate role. No, the "directive unity" does not have its source in thought. Neither thought nor intuition can dominate.

##### 5. The Second Stage: The Essential Unity of Pure Knowledge.

The analysis so far has treated separately the "transcendental aesthetic" and the "transcendental logic." But these "cannot be adequately understood even as elements when considered in isolation; still less can their unity be obtained by a supervenient combination of the isolated members."<sup>76</sup> Perhaps we have not stressed enough the mutual dependence which these elements manifest. If not, then it should now be made manifestly clear that thought is wholly at the service of intuition in

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<sup>75</sup>. See above, p. 61.

<sup>76</sup>. p. 61.

virtue of the latter's primacy in finite knowledge, and is, therefore, dependent. But to no less a degree is intuition dependent upon thought for its determination of the single intuition, a determination which can arise only in the act of conceptual thought. which act relates the one intuition to the many. This mutual dependence "cannot be 'later' than the elements themselves, but must be established 'earlier' in them and serve as their foundation."<sup>77</sup> In other words, their individual unity cannot be prior to their combined unity if, indeed, they are essentially dependent. Having already discussed the nature of unity under "pure" concepts, we see no reason for reiteration relative to the unity here suggested. We can proceed, then, directly to the analysis of their peculiar unity.

The characterization of time as the universal intuition derives from the "inner" sense of succession - "a succession of representations, drives, or moods."<sup>78</sup> Now, a succession of units, one after the other, can properly be termed a "synopsis" of unities<sup>79</sup> if each is always distinct in and of itself. The character of thought, on the other hand, has been found to be "synthetic:" the gathering together of all unities in mutual inter-relation.<sup>80</sup> The question before us, then, enquires as to the nature of that synthesis which precedes the unities of these two elements of finite knowledge a priori. In order to be a true unity, it must manifest a capacity to yield the forms both of synopsis and synthesis, "producing" them, as it were, "in the act of bringing them to unity."<sup>81</sup> Its fundamental character

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77. p. 61.

80. p. 64.

78. See above, p. 71.

81. p. 64.

79. p. 63f.



therefore, must be that of "representation," as is the case with each of the two elements it unites.<sup>82</sup> We are speaking, then, of a synthesis which precedes what it unites. Hence, we are positing a third essential element in the unity of knowledge a priori. This third element is termed the pure synthesis of the imagination, "a blind but indispensable function of the soul, without which we should have no knowledge whatsoever, but of the existence of which we are scarcely ever conscious."<sup>83</sup>

Now, the imagination "requires a reference to a directive unity"<sup>84</sup> within its own structure, because nothing at all precedes its own unity. That is, unlike the other two elements which have been shown to have a "reference to unity" from "above," so to speak, because of their mutual dependence, this new synthesis (of the imagination) has nothing prior to it which can properly be designated a constitutive element in pure knowledge. "The pure synthesis must represent in advance and as such, i.e., in a general way, the unity which pertains to it."<sup>85</sup> This obscure way of putting the matter simply means that the imagination, as pure synthesis, must itself "raise the unity which it represents to the level of a concept" and thereby give unity to itself.<sup>86</sup> In so doing, it would synthesize the modes of representation of the two "lower" elements, synoptic intuition and synthetic thought, and do so "consciously." With this notion of "consciousness" we anticipate somewhat the progress of the argument - but only somewhat. For, Heidegger finds Kant

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82. p. 66.

85. p. 66.

83. K. A78, B103, p. 66.

86. p. 67.

84. p. 66.

already giving expression to the complex action here as "establishing the 'self-sameness' (Selbickheit) of the pure synthesis."<sup>87</sup> This is explained by saying that "the same function which gives unity to the various representations in a judgment also gives unity to the mere synthesis of various representations in an intuition; and this unity, in its most general expression, we entitle the pure concept of the understanding."<sup>88</sup> There is here a "primordial, rich totality of a complex activity which, as intuition and thought, at once unifies and imparts unity. ... Hence, the self-sameness means here an essential structural integrity (Zusammengehörigkeit)."<sup>89</sup> To be sure, this explanation is still somewhat obscure, but clarity must await the next stage in the development. We are provided at this point with only the barest hint as to the nature of this pure synthesis, a hint which lies in these two words Selbickheit and Zusammengehörigkeit. Nevertheless, we have definitely established that the mutual dependence of thought and intuition requires a prior element in pure knowledge a priori, an element which, in virtue of its faculty for synthesis, can make possible the actions of the other two.

#### 6. The Third Stage: The Intrinsic Possibility of the Essential Unity of the Ontological Synthesis.

In order finally to glimpse the essential unity of pure intuition and pure thought, it is necessary to present "the pure synthesis in such a way as to reveal how it is able to unify time and the notion" (pure concept).<sup>90</sup> Kant's effort in this

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87. p. 67.

88. K. A79, B104f., p. 67.

89. p. 68.

90. p. 72.



regard is found in his "Transcendental Deduction of the Categories." But it is the Deduction of the first edition of the Critique that Heidegger finds most authentic - authentic in the sense of accepting the demands of the original problem, namely, the analysis of finite knowledge a priori.

The term "transcendence" is descriptive of that peculiar behavior which is requisite for an encounter with beings which are not ourselves, with "objects." Now, an object must present itself for our intuition. But in order to receive it, we must have "pre-ontological" knowledge, i.e., knowledge of its Being structure. And we must have this prior to any actual encounter with it so that when apprehended, "it" can "be" what it "is." This involves a basic orientation towards..., a prior receptivity, so that when an object does present itself, we can recognize its "being-there." It is this attitude of openness towards..., this anticipation of..., which is termed "transcendence," and which characterizes all behavior relative to being.<sup>92</sup> What is involved, then, in determining the essential unity of the ontological synthesis, is the elucidation of transcendence in terms of the structures already analysed, i.e., the pure synthesis of the imagination in its unification of the faculties of pure intuition (time) and pure thought (notion, concept).

Because finite knowledge is receptive intuition, it requires determinative thought. Pure thought, then, plays a central role in the problem at hand. If "our mode of cognition

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91. p. 73.

92. p. 74f.

is not ontically creative,"<sup>93</sup> that is, if we cannot ourselves create our own objects, what is it, then, that is created, so to speak, in this "anticipative" behavior towards... which must precede the actual presence of an object? It cannot be "something." Therefore, it must be Nothing (Nichts).<sup>94</sup> Transcendence, then, is the act of anticipating Nothing so that when "something" presents itself, its "difference" will be apparent.

This Nothing is not to be understood as the nihil absolutum,<sup>95</sup> rather, it is to be construed as the "precursory resistance of Being,"<sup>96</sup> a kind of pressure, as it were, exerted by the Nothing itself, a pressure to which transcendence is innately aware. "Through this constraint all that is encountered is in advance forced into an accord (Einstimmigkeit)" in virtue of its fundamental difference with what is not in accord, i.e., the Nothing. This "accord" is the "precursory and constant drawing together into unity (Zusammenzug auf Einheit) and is therefore the anticipation of unity.<sup>97</sup> And unity is, of course, the hallmark of the concept. This act of "objectification," then, is the primordial concept (Urbegriff), and the "product" of the active understanding, i.e., thought.<sup>98</sup>

"The latter as a complete totality contains in itself a diversity of modes of unification. Consequently, the pure understanding is revealed as the faculty which makes the act of objectification possible. The understanding as a totality gives in advance all that is opposed to the haphazard. Representing unity originally and precisely as unifying, the understanding presents to itself a form of constraint which in advance imposes its rule on all possible modes of togetherness."<sup>99</sup>

93. p. 76.  
97. p. 75.

94. p. 76.  
98. p. 78.

95. p. 77.  
99. p. 78.

96. p. 76.



The mention here of a "rule" as regards the unification imposed by pure thought is worth elaboration. Consider the case of a concept which is predicative, i.e., has "content" relative to empirical perception. The precise nature of its unity may well be "imprecise," even obscure, though the person whose it is be an "authority" on the subject. Is it not so, that the more truly authoritative - in the academic sense - a person becomes on a given subject, the more obscure becomes his treatment of it, that is the more complex and difficult it becomes for the average layman? What better example could be given than this treatment by Kant and Heidegger of that simplest of everyday concepts, Being? Nevertheless, for such concepts as comprise empirical knowledge, even though obscure, the "rule" of unity applies. A four year old child has a grasp of Being which for him is adequate in virtue of its integrity, its unity, its completeness, however inadequate it might prove to be for his elders, and especially for the "experts" whose treatments of the subject are now "classic."

"Now, the pure concepts (conceptus reflectentes) are those which have such normative unities as their sole content."<sup>100</sup> As we have already seen, the pure concept of unity has for its content only a manifold of units each of which is in no wise different from that of the totality of this manifold. For, unity is essentially undifferentiable when free of all empirical content. Pure thought, then, can be characterized as the "faculty of rules,"<sup>101</sup> and we anticipate the rule to be "unity."

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100. p. 79.

101. K. A126, p. 79.

We might gather from this that the understanding is therefore to be considered the supreme faculty of the mind, for, its representation determines intuition according to its "rule," and therefore makes intuition possible. But such would be an oversight, a forgetting of the primacy of intuition, the representations of which presuppose any "content" for reason to "rule." This will become clear as we proceed with the "transcendental deduction," an analysis which will provide the perspective necessary to a proper appreciation of this inter-relation.

Keeping in mind that our task is the elucidation of transcendence as the intrinsic possibility of ontological knowledge,<sup>102</sup> we approach the "deduction" from two directions in order better to show the mutual a priori dependence of intuition and reason.<sup>103</sup> The first way, to follow Kant, is "from above," i.e., from the understanding "down" to intuition.<sup>104</sup> Before beginning, however, an important note: the "deduction" here is not a "logical" process so much as it is an analysis which delineates the relations between intuition and thought, so as to demonstrate their necessary connection with the pure synthesis of the imagination.

In the act of objectification, there is an anticipative attitude towards unity. This representation of unity is itself an expression (an outward-pressing) of unity, i.e., of pure thought. But while it is anticipating unity "outside," it is all the while maintaining itself, as it were, in its own unity as its "self-identity."<sup>105</sup> That is, this act "turns towards

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102. p. 81.      103. p. 81.      104. K. A116-20, p. 82.  
 105. K. A168, p. 83.



itself" in the moment that it turns outward in anticipation.<sup>106</sup> Therefore, this act, in terms of "thought," "has the character of 'I think,'" or from the standpoint of the pure concept, of "I can."<sup>107</sup> However it is put, it matters not (for the moment) so long as this character of "consciousness," of self-awareness, is captured. For, this reciprocity is not something that "is present and operative on certain occasions" only, but is "constant" and "unchangeable." This transcendental apperception, as Kant terms it,<sup>108</sup> accounts for both the "self" reference and that of "objects," in virtue, as we have seen, of the unique relation of unity to unity in the "pure" concept.

Should the way it is put matter, we would have to say that the designations "I think" and "I can" are surely interpreted in the above as possessing "content." That is, the "I" must be construed as the self-identification of a concrete person. But pure thought is acting in its pro-position of unity "anticipatively." No being has as yet been given. Therefore, we have a condition of live potentiality, which is appropriately designated, perhaps, as "unity thinks unity" (for pure thought). and "unity can unify" (for the pure concept). The "I" can only enter in the moment that an ontic being enters this anticipatory realm which is already there a priori, for, at the moment, this unity is non-ontic. "As non-ontic, this unity has the essential tendency to unify that which is not yet unified."<sup>109</sup> It follows, then, that there is presupposed in "unification" a synthesis.<sup>110</sup>

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106. K. A116, p. 83

107. p. 83.

108. K. A107, p. 83.

109. p. 84.

110. K. A116, p. 84; In this paragraph we have taken exception both to Heidegger and Kant in withdrawing the "I" from

In the second stage of this analysis, it was established that all synthesis is the product of imagination even though the character of pure thought has been established as "synthetic." That thought's synthetic character derives from the pure synthesis of the imagination becomes very clear once thought is shown to be self-reflective in its act of unification. For, if the "consciousness" of the transcendental apperception is "constant" and "unchanging," then, pure intuition (time) is somehow involved in this "duration." And since apperception cannot itself supply itself with intuition's "succession of now's," then, its dependence upon the mediation of the pure synthesis is demonstrated to be a synthesis which is capable of forming representations typical of both intuition and thought.<sup>111</sup>

The "second way" of the transcendental deduction starts from "below," so to speak, and moves "up" towards pure reason. Again, we are most intent upon seeing a relation which is "pre-supposed."

Pure intuition is receptive, but possesses nothing in itself "corresponding to a connection (Verbundenheit) between phenomena."<sup>112</sup> Such a connection is necessary, however, if its "single" intuitions are ever to be joined in mutual relation so as to reveal "something," i.e., an "object" in its context.

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"I think" and "I can" because the "I" presupposes "ontic" content. The argument suffers for lack of the insight which comes only at the very end of this study, namely, that time is "pure self-affection" in knowledge "a priori." The next paragraph contains the problem and points toward its solution.

111. pp. 84ff.

112. p. 87.



What is required, then, is a faculty for forming relations in general. "But this power of 'forming' relations originally is the pure imagination itself."<sup>113</sup> Yet, "the medium wherein joining and forming connections is possible is time as the universal pure intuition."<sup>114</sup> Thus, we readily find that both intuition and imagination "presuppose" the "unchanging and permanent" ego of transcendental apperception with its potential of self-reflecting unity.<sup>115</sup> But we also are enabled to see that the mediation of the pure synthesis is required to bridge the gap between the synoptic manifold of time and the pure concept of unity before either the manifold is furnished with the "connecting" power of the pure concept, or the pure concept is given the necessary temporal flux that will "enable" it to function "synthetically." Thus, we move "up" from intuition to pure reason "through" the pure synthesis.

At this point, it should be clear that both "ways" of the deduction lead to the same conclusion via the necessary "mediation" of the imagination.<sup>116</sup> A certain ambiguity, however, has persisted throughout the argument because the direction taken has been from the "two" elements of pure reason to the third. The synoptic character of primary intuition and the synthetic character of apperception, once these have been established, cause a certain difficulty in conceiving the pure synthesis of the imagination as actually prior to either of these. In addition, the explication of the natures of these two faculties has necessarily involved "relations" which have presupposed the

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113. p. 87.

114. p. 87.

115. p. 88.

116. p. 88.

"syn-" character of the imagination. In consequence, the way has led through an already "dynamic" intuition (succession) and an already "dynamic" apperception (concept), but both of these are quite impossible "dynamically" except the "syn-" character of pure imagination "enables," or empowers, both the "syn-opsis" and the "syn-thesis." Heidegger, indeed, stresses this structural relation,<sup>117</sup> but so early in the argument that we failed to attach the significance it deserves.

Yet, once this "syn-" character of imagination is seen, and its "dynamic" impact on the two lesser faculties is appreciated, another problem arises: the imagination has become significantly dominant. If we are intent upon an analysis of transcendence as the a priori faculty of finite knowledge, can intuition lose its primacy? In order to answer this question, we must retrace our steps to some degree, and enter upon a more detailed regression into the question of the nature of the "concept." This "return" is required because, in order to elucidate to a degree even greater than either Kant or Heidegger did, we have, in this interpretation, anticipated certain results which are yielded only upon a closer scrutiny of concepts. Justice is done to the work of these men only if we follow them into the terribly obscure regions of the "schematism."

#### 7. The Fourth Stage: The Ground of the Intrinsic Possibility of Ontological Knowledge

Once the pre-eminence of the imagination is established,

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117. p. 67.



we have the problem of the finitude of ontological knowledge. The answer to it must lie in the establishment of the essential unity of transcendence, or, in other terms, in the essential unity of this tri-partite structure now shown to be dominated by imagination. Heidegger sees the "Schematism of the Pure Concepts of the Understanding," which is the discussion of this relation, to be the very "heart" of Kant's Critique.<sup>118</sup> And we will recall that it was the "Schematism" which Heidegger termed, in his Introduction to Being and Time, one of the "decisive stages" in the history of ontology.<sup>118a</sup>

The act of objectification, in virtue of its "anticipative" attitude, has about it an "offering-character" (Angebots-charackter).<sup>119</sup> But as a priori, that which is offered cannot be said to have concrete content. It is an open anticipation towards.... At the same time, this act must have about it something that is "perceptible" in the sense that it can be "immediately received by intuition."<sup>120</sup> In other words, there must be a "consciousness" of this "open" attitude towards.... Thus, the act of objectification must involve an "intuitive" understanding: a pure understanding based on and guided by pure intuition.<sup>121</sup>

The character of the "horizon" offered is that of "pure aspect:" "the aspect of that which is capable of offering itself." But, in virtue of the combined action of intuition and understanding, imagination "forms" this horizon in such a way that

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118. p. 94.

120. p. 95.

118a. Being and Time, p. 44.

121. p. 95.

119. p. 94.

it "provides for the possibility of an 'image' (Bild) in general."<sup>122</sup> The offering of an image "is to make the horizon sensible. This horizon of transcendence can be formed only in a sensibilization."<sup>123</sup>

Now, from the point of view of the pure understanding whose mode of action is that of representing unities which regulate unification, "transcendence is formed in the sensibilization of pure concepts."<sup>124</sup> That is, the images formed by the imagination must be "pure:" without any "content," "sensible" (intuitive), and "conceptual."

At this point we interrupt this analysis to ask if this notorious obscurity can be made lucid. Can we illustrate? The pure, sensible images formed by the pure imagination might be likened to the "pictures" which would result if a strip of movie film were developed after the whole of it had been grossly overexposed to light. The result would be a series of frames of absolutely nothing. That is, these "empty" frames might be said to be analogous to the "pure images" offered a priori. Let us see what happens.

Since the intuition is fundamentally receptive, it cannot create that which it intuits. But in the "offering-character" of the act of objectification, we have something that can be received by the intuition: the pure image which is formed by the imagination in intimate relation with the regulative action

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122. p. 95.

123. p. 96.

124. p. 96.

125. p. 96.



of the pure concept.<sup>125</sup> What, however, is the nature of this pure image when it is under the regulation of the pure concept? We have tried to suggest the answer to this by analogy. But the analogy must be expanded because each "frame" of a movie film, when properly exposed, yields but a single intuition, so to speak, whereas the "image" of a concept cannot be adequately represented by "single" intuitions. "A concept by its very essence cannot be put into an image."<sup>126</sup> Rather, the concept is better represented in our analogy by the whole "strip" of pictures, each of which is related, but incapable of communicating what the whole strip does. The problem of the "schematism" is focused right here in this relation between the "single" intuition (the single frame of a movie film) and the "concept" (the whole movie). The argument advanced is that the pure image must be a "schema-image." That is, it must be "conceptual" rather than pictorial, i.e., single. And the "conceptual" must be "pure," i.e., without empirical content.

Kant sees the concept as having an "image" and entitles this latter "the schema of this concept."<sup>127</sup> And Heidegger interprets him to be saying:

"The formation of a schema insofar as it is accomplished as a mode of sensibilization is called schematism. To be sure, the schema is to be distinguished from the image, but it is also related to the latter, i.e., the schema necessarily possess the character of an image. This character has its own nature."<sup>128</sup>

The problem is also put in terms which were used in the earlier discussions of the concept:

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125. p. 96.

128. p. 101f.

126. p. 99.

127. K. A140, B179f., p. 101.

"To be sure, the empirical image contains everything in the concept, if not more. But the image does not contain its object in the manner in which the concept represents it, i.e., as the one which applies to the many. The content of the empirical image is presented as being one thing among many, i.e., as particularized by that which is thematically represented as such."<sup>129</sup>

Or, to cast it again in terms of our movie film: the totality of the movie, itself a unity, has a reference to the individual frames which make it up that is wholly different from that which the single frame has to the totality. The former is the "one which applies to the many," while the individual frame is "the one among many." From these formulations it should be clear that so long as the problem is cast in empirical terms, a great deal of difficulty is to be encountered - difficulty that begins to look like impossibility. It is only after an agonizing effort to move from the particular intuition of, say, a dog to the concept "dog," and back again,<sup>130</sup> that Heidegger reaches this conclusion:

"The sensibilization of concepts is a completely specific operation which yields images of a particular kind. Sensibilization, as productive of schemata, can neither be understood by analogy with the usual 'putting into an image' nor can it be traced back to this idea. Such a reduction is so little feasible that, on the contrary, sensibilization in the sense first described - the immediate, empirical perception of things and the formation of empirical reproductions of these things - can take place only on the basis of a possible sensibilization of concepts in the manner in which this is accomplished in schematism."<sup>131</sup>

And according to Kant, "this schematism ... is an art concealed in the depths of the human soul."<sup>132</sup> So goes our effort to illustrate.

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<sup>129</sup>. p. 102f.

<sup>130</sup>. pp. 102-05.

<sup>131</sup>. p. 105f.

<sup>132</sup>. K. A141, B180, p. 106.



A clue, however, has been discovered in the progress of the argument. Although the concept "dog" met with failure, that of mathematical forms, e.g., the "triangle," came closer to meeting the need.<sup>133</sup> Will mathematics afford a final breakthrough?

For the sake of clarity, it is worth repeating that the term "schematism" is descriptive of the alleged active sensibilization of the schema-images of the schemata of pure concepts as these are formed by the pure imagination and offered as the horizon of objectification prior to empirical intuition. The problem now is to "prove" that this is what happens.<sup>134</sup> "The function of the mode of sensibilization, which forms schemata, is to procure an image for a given concept."<sup>135</sup> The particular schema "puts itself, i.e., puts the concept, into an image."<sup>136</sup> This means, to take the point of view of the understanding, that the pure concepts "which are thought as the pure 'I think'" must be intuitable if this whole matter of objectification is going to take place.

But "the schema of a pure concept ... can never be reduced to any image whatsoever,"<sup>137</sup> unless the expression "image" is understood to "signify a definite type of image to the exclusion of all others."<sup>138</sup> The peculiar signification intended here is to apply in virtue of a relation to pure intuition, i.e., time.<sup>139</sup> "Pure concepts, through the mediation of the pure synthesis of the transcendental imagination, are essentially related to pure

133. p. 104f.

134. p. 106f.

135. p. 107.

136. p. 107.

137. K. A142, B181, p. 107.

138. p. 107.

139. p. 107.

intuition (time), and this relation is reciprocal."<sup>140</sup>

As pure intuition, time can be said to furnish an "image," namely, "the pure succession of the now-sequence,"<sup>141</sup> i.e., the synopsis. But to speak of it in this general way is to lose sight of the essential mode of intuition as "single." But since "different times are but parts of one and the same time,"<sup>142</sup> every "single" intuition of time is indistinguishable, as a pure intuition, from the totality of time. "Hence, time is not only the necessarily pure image of the schemata of pure concepts,... but also their only possibility of [presenting] a pure image."<sup>143</sup>

Yet, if the schemata of the pure concepts "derive their image from time, taken as a pure image, by introducing them to time in the form of rules," then, we have the case of a multiplicity of pure images developing from a single one.<sup>144</sup> Thus, the pure understanding "determines" time (as a sequence of temporal units), and the intuition, in turn, provides the "image" ("single," i.e., unity) for the schemata of the pure concepts. But as we have seen in the "transcendental deduction," these inter-relations are made possible only through the mediation of the transcendental imagination with its "syn-" character. The schemata, therefore, are "transcendental determinations of time."<sup>145</sup> "This schematism forms transcendence a priori and, therefore, is termed 'transcendental schematism.'"<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>140</sup>. p. 108.  
<sup>143</sup>. p. 109.  
<sup>146</sup>. p. 109.

<sup>141</sup>. p. 108.  
<sup>144</sup>. p. 109.

<sup>142</sup>. K. A31f., B47, p. 109.  
<sup>145</sup>. K. A138, p. 109.



The crux of the argument here presented lies in the double transitions: "from one to many," and "from many to one." The pure concept is "temporalized" by being introduced to the pure intuition of time, the concept's rule making possible the singular character of intuition's mode of intuition. This is a case of the "many" determining the "one." But on the other hand, time as the primary intuition is always "single" and provides the "image" for the pure concept, the character of which is described as the "rule" of "the one which applies to the many." In this latter case, because every moment is but a part of time which is "one and the same," this "particular" moment can be the one which applies to the many.

Or, to put it even more precisely, the rule of the one which applies to the many is such that it singles out a unity from the many and makes it "unique." But the reciprocity of the relation also begins with this unique one, and offers it to the multiplicity of the many as the "one" which "rules" over them, thereby making them "units."

This latter formulation sets the matter out solely in terms of "mathematical" unity even though the argument specifically introduces time as the crucially determining factor. We could, however, have framed it in terms of time as follows: The intuition of time is single. Therefore, this "unique" moment is provided as the "schema-image" for the schemata of the pure concepts which are characterized by the "rule" of this unique moment as it applies to the many moments which constitute time. This "rule," however, when applied to intuition, "determines"

time in the sense that it specifies that this intuition be "unique" and therefore the moment which is representative of all moments, i.e., the one "among" many.

Not only have we juxtaposed these formulations, but we have tried also to demonstrate their interchangeability. Whether one uses time or unity makes no difference. This being the case, then the transition required to reduce the transcendental imagination to a place of equality with primary intuition is accomplished. But more than this: The relation of unity to temporality is likewise demonstrated. But of this latter, more later.

Once time is shown to be interchangeable with unity, then any pre-eminence the imagination may have been thought to have is shattered and its sensibilization established. No less are the syntheses of the transcendental imagination shown to be finite in character.

We can summarize. The act of objectification involves an "offering" of an "horizon" a priori within which, and on account of which, objects, should they "present" themselves, can be intuited "as such." The transcendental schematism has proved to be the structure of pure transcendence which discloses not only the latter's finitude, but the structure of ontological knowledge as such.<sup>147</sup> Intuition is saved its primacy but not at the expense of transcendence. It should now be clear that transcendence is primary insofar as its "action" is required

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<sup>147</sup>. p. 113.



to an extent no less than intuition's. Hence, the unity of transcendence is established in a way that demonstrates its finitude. But does transcendence account for "knowledge"?

"Pure" thought is not knowledge; it has no concrete "content." At the most, it is but an essential element of knowledge: that which makes knowledge of the object possible. Something more is required, then, to bind pure thought, i.e., transcendence, to the empirical object in order to account for finite knowledge as such.<sup>148</sup>

### 8. The Fifth Stage: The Complete Determination of the Essence of Ontological Knowledge

So far, we have taken every precaution to keep the structure of pure thought "pure," that is, free of any empirical object. But now the connection must be made with that which is wholly "different:" the "predicate." But this is not a matter of the predicate's relation to the subject (the apophantic-predicative synthesis). Rather, it is this whole latter's relation to "something altogether different,"<sup>149</sup> namely, the object itself. This latter relation as judicative requires an "accord." Therefore, it is the "veritative" synthesis which is here to be considered.<sup>150</sup>

The way, however, by which this synthesis is to be approached is in terms of its possibility: "the possibility of experience."<sup>151</sup> The "triplicity" of the elements in the struc-

<sup>148</sup>. p. 119.

<sup>150</sup>. p. 120.

<sup>149</sup>. K. A154, B193f., p. 120.

<sup>151</sup>. K. A156ff., B195ff., p. 121.

tural unity of transcendence provides, as we have seen, the "medium" within which the "totally different" (over which the knowing being is not master) "can be encountered."<sup>152</sup> But until this encounter is made, knowledge must remain merely a possibility and not a reality. In order that it may become a reality, the essential unity of the structure of transcendence must be demonstrated precisely in its relation to that which is "totally different" so that the distinct possibility of finite knowledge emerges in all possible clarity. Once this is demonstrated, we shall have the basis for "objective reality in all our a priori modes of knowledge."<sup>153</sup> We would emphasize that our approach is in terms of "possibility," and not "reality."

Experience has already been made possible on one level: in the act of orientation towards.... But unless the experience thereby made possible is "true," it hardly serves the purpose. "Truth, however, means 'agreement with the object.'"<sup>154</sup> What is the standard by which truth is defined and how is this standard regulated? Surprisingly enough, Kant declares that the conditions which govern the possibility of experience are, at the same time, those which regulate the possibility of the objects of experience. This proposition, says Kant, is valid for all "judgments;" it is what he terms "the highest principle of all synthetic judgments."<sup>155</sup> Heidegger sees the heart of this principle to reside in the phrase, "at the same time." For, "it expresses the essential unity of the complete structure of

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152. p. 120.      153. K. A156, B195, p. 122.

154. K. A157, B196f., p. 122.      155. K. A158, B197, p. 123.



transcendence." "The act of orientation which lets something take up a position opposite to... forms as such the horizon of objectivity in general."<sup>156</sup> That is, the movement towards... which provides the a priori realm within which objectification can take place is a movement outwards. It is a removal, an exposition, an Ek-stasis or ecstatic ex-sistence,<sup>157</sup> a position "beyond," which "forms and pro-poses to itself an horizon. Transcendence is in itself ecstatic-horizontal."<sup>158</sup>

The criterion for "truth," then, is found to be transcendence itself. This does not mean that the conditions set forth (which govern both the possibility of experience and the possibility of the objects of experience) "always occur together" or are inevitably thought-of together, or even thought-of at all.<sup>159</sup> Rather, it is that this expression "at the same time," relative to these conditions, "is the expression of the original phenomenological knowledge of the intrinsically unitary structure of transcendence."<sup>160</sup> For this reason, Heidegger agrees with Kant that this is indeed the "highest of all synthetic judgments."<sup>161</sup>

That principle which discloses the intrinsic possibility of the essence of the ontological synthesis, once it has been found, constitutes the basis or the foundation of metaphysica generalis. The foundation has been laid; "ontological knowledge

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<sup>156</sup>. p. 123.

<sup>157</sup>. This particular formulation appears in some of Heidegger's later works. It is not posed here specifically, but the context without question intends it.

<sup>158</sup>. p. 123.      <sup>159</sup>. p. 124.      <sup>160</sup>. p. 124.      <sup>161</sup>. p. 124.

has proved to be that which forms transcendence."<sup>162</sup> It must be kept in mind, however, that that which is "created" by transcendence is not the "object," but merely the "realm" or "horizon" within which an object, should it present itself "there" can be known as "object." The precise nature of that which is created, i.e., the "realm" or "horizon," rather than being a "something" is a "Nothing."<sup>163</sup> Kant speaks of it as an "object" but calls it "X."<sup>164</sup> Heidegger prefers "Nothing."

Kant, as is virtually common knowledge, took the position that "appearances" are all we can know, that the "thing-in-itself" hides, as it were, behind the appearances which seem to present themselves to intuition.<sup>165</sup> We take this formulation to be Kant's attempt to express the "relative" character of knowledge. That is, this present generation of men sees the things-that-are-present in a way wholly different from that of pre-scientific generations. Yet, there has been a continuity throughout. Dogs are still dogs even though their care nowadays may bear little semblance to the practise of many years ago. Today, dogs have orbited the earth, are "curbed" and otherwise "broken" to the ways of a modern technological age. But what will their care be like tomorrow? To be sure, we do not know. In order, then, to allow for the full evolution of knowledge, "appearances" are suggested as the various stages along the way towards full and final knowledge.

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<sup>162</sup>. p. 124.

<sup>163</sup>. p. 125.

<sup>164</sup>. K. A108f., p. 128.

<sup>165</sup>. K. A235ff., B295ff., p. 126.



Kant's "X" is this "transcendental object," this object which may ultimately be known ultimately, but which now is known only partially. It is the fulness of the knowledge of the transcendental object which we do not have. Therefore, we do not "know" it as such.<sup>166</sup> Yet, we have in transcendence this "horizon" which somehow discloses this "transcendental object" - not as something known, but merely revealed as "horizon," i.e., a limit beyond which it is impossible to go. Or, more abstractly, what is known is "that which in advance constitutes the surpassing (Überschlag) of all possible objects qua ob-jective, the horizon of an ob-jectification."<sup>167</sup> But more precisely: That which is known is not a "something" but a Nothing because "ontological" knowledge is not the knowledge of beings "as such," but is the knowledge of Being.<sup>168</sup>

It was said that "ontological" knowledge could only properly be termed "knowledge" if it attained the "truth," and truth implies "accord" with its object. If "ontological knowledge 'forms' transcendence, and this formation is nothing but the holding open of the horizon within which the Being of beings is perceptible in advance," then, "provided that truth means the unconcealment (Unverborgenheit) of ..., transcendence is original truth."<sup>169</sup>

But truth may also be understood as the disclosure of the "overtness" of beings, that is, their being "there" as such. "If ontological knowledge discloses the horizon, then, its truth

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166. p. 126f.      167. p. 127.      168. p. 128.      169. p. 128.

lies in letting beings be encountered within this horizon."<sup>170</sup> That is to say, ontological knowledge is practical; it has an empirical use. Such a conclusion, however, is predisposed towards objects (as presently conceived) as the criterion of truth. That is, there is a tendency to sway here at the end of this fifth stage of the argument either toward ontological truth or toward ontical truth. Kant, in saying that it has only "empirical use," reverts to ontical truth, while Heidegger keeps the question open.<sup>171</sup> Or, so it appears. Yet, in point of fact, it is too early to draw definitive conclusions either way.

The argument here at the last of this fifth stage has been terse and inconclusive. The reintroduction of the term "Nothing" and the introduction of "overtness," "unconcealment," and the "truth" of Being - not to mention their inter-relation - demands fuller treatment if they are supposed to "round off" the argument. To be sure, Heidegger does treat these terms more fully, and our later chapters will expound their meaning and relation, but for the moment we must be satisfied with but a hint of their efficacy as inevitable conclusions on the grounds of consistency.

Nevertheless, we do begin to see with this last stage in the laying of the foundation of ontology that the traditional structures of metaphysica generalis, and more especially, those of metaphysica specialis (the knowledge of Man, Nature and God) begin to totter. Kant's has been a transformation, a virtual revolution.<sup>172</sup> But why has this not been generally seen before -

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170. p. 128.

171. K. A146, B185, p. 128.

172. p. 12 .



at least to the extent here indicated? Heidegger will answer this question as he proceeds to explicate Kant's discovery more originally. This would indicate that Kant has not been properly understood, that traditional interpretations are wanting. But more, it indicates that Heidegger intends to go beyond Kant, to interpret his intentions as well as his deeds, i.e., his Critique.

#### 9. The Transcendental Imagination as the "Root" of the Two Stems

In the third section of his "Kantbook," Heidegger attempts to explicate the originality of the Kantian Critique in a more original way yet than Kant himself did. This means necessarily that "interpretation" in this section is going to run the risk of "violence" because what is to be drawn out of the text of the Critique will go beyond what Kant explicitly says. But it does not intend to go beyond what is implicit. Heidegger is here only attempting to articulate what Kant "intended" to say but was never quite able to do for various reasons.<sup>173</sup>

Before proceeding, it is appropriate to summarize what has been gained, i.e., the "laying of the foundation of metaphysica generalis" or "the essential unity of ontological knowledge and the basis of its possibility."<sup>174</sup>

"Ontological knowledge 'forms' transcendence, i.e., it holds open the horizon which is made perceptible in advance by the

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173. See "Author's Preface to the Second Edition," p. xxv, and the Translator's Introduction, p. xix.

174. p. 134.

by the pure schemata. These schemata 'arise' as the 'transcendental product'<sup>175</sup> of the transcendental imagination. The latter as the original, pure synthesis forms the essential unity of pure intuition (time) and pure thought (apperception)."<sup>176</sup>

It is not, however, only in the "schematism" that the imagination occupies a central position. We found it there in the Deduction (stage 3) as well. Moreover, it was necessary to mention it in our first "characterization of the essential unity of ontological knowledge" (stage 2), so that almost from the first the imagination has been central.<sup>177</sup> It has been found to be a faculty which, because it is yoked with pure intuition in pure synthesis, it can intuit what needs not to be "there," i.e., a Nothing. And the horizon of this Nothing, being fundamentally temporal in character, is that peculiar "ontological knowledge a priori," i.e., the knowledge of "Being," which, given in advance, makes possible the intuition of objects as beings "totally different" from the knowing being, and "there," i.e., "objective." Hence, the imagination "enjoys a peculiar independence with respect to beings."<sup>178</sup>

This notion of "independence" from objects is found in Kant's Anthropologie and not in the Critique's first edition, but its basis, if not its specific formulation, is to be found in the Critique's discussion of the "schematism."<sup>179</sup> But, despite a considerable treatment of the imagination in the Anthropologie, this latter never discusses transcendence in particular, and therefore fails to measure up as a "source" from which

<sup>175</sup>. K. A142, B181, p. 134.

<sup>176</sup>. p. 134.

<sup>177</sup>. p. 134 f.

<sup>178</sup>. p. 135.

<sup>179</sup>. p. 138.



to glean further data for this "more original" exposition of the "formative center of ontological knowledge."<sup>180</sup> In consequence, the source for this further study will continue to be, by and large, the first edition of the Critique.

Heidegger sees his first task to be to set out the imagination as the "fundamental faculty" of transcendence. And by "faculty" he means "potential" (Vermögen) both in the sense of "possibility" and capacity to act (vermag).<sup>181</sup> This involves pointing out the discrepancies in Kant's exposition as it varies from the first to the second editions.<sup>182</sup> The argument yields Kant's own acknowledgment of the "third" faculty as occupying a central place, providing one uses the "text" as the criterion for judgment and not publication dates. For, it is apparent that the second edition has undergone radical revision at the expense of consistency.

Kant's mode of presentation is such that intuition and apperception are characterized as the two "stems" from which arise ontological knowledge, and these stems appear to receive by far the greater emphasis. Heidegger intends, however, to disclose the "root" of these stems, the root which has already been discerned, however darkly.

In order to establish the imagination as the root of the two stems, Heidegger must reduce pure intuition and pure thought to products of the imagination.<sup>183</sup> Does this mean that know-

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180. pp. 134-41; see esp. p. 140.  
182. pp. 141-44.

181. p. 141.  
183. p. 145.

ledge shall then be reduced to the status, say, of imaginary figment? The answer to this has already been given to the extent that transcendence has been shown to be the condition for the possibility of all knowledge whatsoever: both knowledge a-priori, i.e., ontological knowledge, and "objective knowledge." If such a conclusion were drawn (that all knowledge is "imaginary"), this judgment would itself have to be so interpreted: plainly a circuitous argument, and one from which no escape is possible. The need to make judgments, to constitute knowledge, as we shall see in due course, is irresistible and accounts for, indeed, illustrates, the "transcendental" character of the human Dasein for which we are not altogether responsible. Dasein is finite.

Though Heidegger does not answer the question posed above precisely as we have, he nevertheless reaches the same conclusion in proposing, because the transcendental imagination is "finite," that it has an "untruth" (Unwahrheit) corresponding to its "truth."<sup>184</sup> But he fails to dwell on it, choosing instead to treat the matter more fully elsewhere<sup>185</sup> because such a discussion would ultimately rest upon the "essence" of the transcendental imagination: the project now underway.<sup>186</sup>

If, then, the imagination does not make knowledge imaginary, neither does it constitute a "'fundamental power' in the soul."<sup>187</sup> At the very most, "this regression to the essential origin of

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184. p. 146.

185. See below, Chapter VI.

186. p. 146.

187. p. 146.



transcendence ... moves in the dimension of 'possibilities,' i.e., in the dimension of that which makes possible."<sup>188</sup> Nothing here is to be understood as a "monistic-empirical" explanation.<sup>189</sup> In other words, we are not positing the "facts" of the case, but are examining rather its possibilities for what they may be worth.

The procedure to be followed in this effort to reveal the root of the two stems will continue to be oriented according to the "stages" already laid down, but without specific reference to them. First to be considered is the relation of the transcendental imagination to pure intuition.<sup>190</sup> The pure intuitions of space and time are "original" in the sense that they "spring forth" as "representations" which "pro-pose" (vor-stellen) in advance the image of space and time as "multiple totalities in themselves."<sup>191</sup> This means that they are "formative" in the sense that they "receive" what they themselves "give." Hence, they are "originative" and are born, so to speak, of pure imagination.<sup>192</sup>

The specific nature of these intuitions as "multiple totalities," however, is to be distinguished from the "concepts." The "parts" of these intuitive totalities, "always but limitations of themselves," are alone what is "clear," whereas the totalities themselves are "generally indistinct." What and where are the boundaries of space and time? Hence, these unities are appropriately designated as "synoptic" rather than "synthetic."

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188. p. 147.

189. p. 147.

190. pp. 148-52.

191. p. 148.

192. p. 148.

They "cannot arise from the 'synthesis of the understanding.'" Their "formative" aspects must derive their "syn-" character from the imagination.<sup>193</sup> And as these formations cannot be said to have any "form" in the ontic sense, then it should be clear that they can be none other than the "products" of imagination, i.e., "pure" images.<sup>194</sup> But, again, these pure images of space and time are not nothing in the sense of nihil absolutum. Their nature is ontological rather than ontic; as such they are something "positive," i.e., Nothing. "They are never intuited" in the sense that something ontic is, but "are intuited according to the modality of an act which is originally form-giving."<sup>195</sup> Should we attempt to make this more intelligible, we would say that when an ontical object is intuited, its "form" presupposes delimitation by space and time. These presuppositions, then, give "form" to the object, yet themselves have not been intuited "as such," nor have they been pre-figured as a kind of advance calculation which cuts the object loose from the unity of its context in order that it may then be grasped as "object." Rather, they are products of the imagination which are requisite to "objectification."<sup>196</sup> As such, they are no doubt arbitrary<sup>197</sup> and therefore "imaginative."

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193. p. 149.      194. p. 150.      195. p. 151.

196. A more detailed analysis of this obscure relation is given below in Section 10.

197. It is common knowledge that units of spatial (linear) measure are not universally standardized. Nor is time. A scientist from Cornell University, U.S.A., was interviewed on BBC TV early in 1964, and he disclosed that investigations of "time" are underway because the "second" has not as yet been sufficiently determined to assure the accuracy necessary in space-age technology. The arbitrary character of our temporal distinctions should be clear if for no other reason than that they are based on the rhythm of our solar system. Other systems would have other rhythms.



The next step takes us into an evaluation of the relation between imagination and theoretical reason.<sup>198</sup> Having just shown that "sensibility" arises in the imagination, it might appear at first sight improbable that pure reason can "arise" from a "sensible," i.e., intuitive, source without itself being also sensible. "But thought and intuition, though distinct, are not separated from one another like two totally different things. ... Both are modes of representation of...."<sup>199</sup>

It will be recalled that reason is "dependent" upon intuition and that this dependent structure "is how it is and what it is in the pure synthesis of the pure imagination."<sup>200</sup> Yet, does not pure reason enjoy a certain autonomy? Certainly "traditional logic" presupposes this autonomous character. But Kant, even in the second edition, subordinates logic to the "synthetic unity of apperception,"<sup>201</sup> a structure already disclosed to possess the "synthetic" character of the pure synthesis.

The characterization of thought as the "faculty of rules" defines its essence.<sup>202</sup> This faculty represents, i.e., proposes, in advance "those unities" which regulate "all possible modes of unification." These unities (notions or categories) are not only "disposed in accordance with their proper affinity but must also be included in advance in an abiding unity ... even more primordial."<sup>203</sup> In the act of objectification, pure thought represents "itself" in an attitude towards...., and this

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198. pp. 153-62.

199. p. 154.

200. p. 154.

201. K. B154, fn., p. 156.

202. K. A126, p. 156.

203. p. 156.

"self" is consequently "taken outside" itself towards.... In this "primordial" act, this "abiding" unity, i.e., this "I," is made manifest.<sup>204</sup> "Inasmuch as this 'I' is what it is only in the 'I think,' the essence of pure thought as well as that of the 'I' lies in 'pure self-consciousness.'" And this "consciousness" can only be explained in terms of the Being of the self, "not conversely." That is, the "ego" is the "vehicle" of the "faculty of rules" "inasmuch as in its precursory act of orientation it puts them in a position wherein, as represented, they can be regulative, unifying unities."<sup>205</sup> Consequently, the pure understanding is itself a "pre-formation" of unity, a "formative spontaneity which occurs in the 'transcendental schematism.'" The pure schemata, however, "form a 'transcendental product of imagination.'"<sup>206</sup> They are not produced by the understanding, but merely "employed" by it, and not just occasionally, but continually. Since the pure schematism is "grounded in the transcendental imagination," pure thought, then, must be so grounded as well.<sup>207</sup>

As if this were not enough, Heidegger further adduces this connection by pointing out that this "I think..." orientation is not judgment, for there is as yet no predicate. Rather, this attitude is more a "free, but not arbitrary, 'envisioning' of something, ... an act of pure imagination."<sup>208</sup>

Both "spontaneity" and "receptivity" are also to be discerned as native to pure reason, traits which have previously been

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204. p. 157.

207. p. 158.

205. p. 157.

208. p. 158.

206. K. A142, B181, p. 157.



associated with intuition.<sup>209</sup> Insofar, then, as pure thought can thus be reduced to transcendental imagination, it, along with pure intuition, must share subordinate roles in ontological knowledge.

Heidegger now turns to "transcendental imagination and practical reason."<sup>210</sup> Although "logical deduction" might well ground "practical" reason in the imagination, the better course is "through an elucidation of the 'practical self.'"<sup>211</sup> "In considering this practical, i.e., moral, self-consciousness, we must seek to determine the respect in which its essential structure refers back to the transcendental imagination as its origin."<sup>212</sup>

"The moral ego, the self, the true essence of man" as "person," that is, "personality," is the "idea of the moral law and the respect which is inseparable from it."<sup>213</sup> "Respect" is the essence of the person as a "moral" self. But respect is a "feeling" and "belongs to sensibility." Insofar, however, as sensibility can be "pure, respect as a feeling might also be the "product" of the subject himself.

An analysis of "feelings" in general reveals that feelings are always feelings for..., "and as such are also ways of feeling oneself."<sup>214</sup> This basic formula has been employed elsewhere as appropriate to the "attitude" or the "behavior" characteristic of objectification. It epitomizes an "openness" towards..., an ex-position into the horizon within which something ontic can

209. p. 160f.

210. pp. 162-66.

211. p. 162

212. p. 163.

213. K. Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone, p. 225., p. 167.

214. p. 164.

appear. Apart from the open attitude towards..., the "moral law" could never be met, so that this basic openness itself is a "respect for..." and, as constitutive of the "self," is self-respect. "Respect in its specific mode of manifestation, has reference to the person."<sup>215</sup>

But "what, or more precisely who, is the self manifested to myself in this feeling of respect? ... In submitting to the law, I submit myself to myself qua pure reason. In submitting to myself, I raise myself to myself as a free being capable of self-determination," thereby revealing the ego in its "dignity." "Respect is the mode of being responsible for the Being of the self; it is the authentic being-as-self."<sup>216</sup> This "projection" of the self in submission to the "possibility of authentic existence," as this possibility is given by the law, is the "essence" of the self, i.e., practical reason.<sup>217</sup> As "self-submission" is surrender to..., it is pure receptivity; and as "free self-imposition," it is spontaneity. Hence, the practical reason's grounding in the synthesis of the transcendental imagination.<sup>218</sup>

From this brief analysis of the relations which pure intuition, theoretical and practical reason have in the transcendental imagination, it becomes increasingly clear that the latter is indeed the root from which the two primary stems arise. This analysis also reveals, then, the significance of the "highest principle of all synthetic judgments," a principle which "speaks of the essential constitution of human beings in general insofar

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<sup>215</sup>. p. 165.

<sup>216</sup>. p. 165.

<sup>217</sup>. p. 165

<sup>218</sup>. p. 166.



as it is defined as finite pure reason."<sup>219</sup> If the essence of man as finite pure reason is indeed "rooted" in the transcendental imagination, then, the "unknown root" of which Kant spoke is now revealed, and this, by means of clues which Kant himself gave. According to Heidegger, Kant "recoiled" from this "unknown root."<sup>220</sup>

But why did he recoil? It wasn't because "he failed to see the possibility of a more primordial laying of the foundation." Rather, it was that such an investigation, although it was "of great importance" to his "chief purpose," nevertheless did not "form an essential part of it." The prime question had always been for him "What and how much can the understanding and reason know apart from all experience? And not, How is the faculty of thought itself possible?"<sup>221</sup>

Without going into the obscurity requisite to disclosing the "possibility" of the "faculty of thought," then, Kant was in no position to see how the traditional judgments of "higher" and "lower" were not really appropriate evaluations of "pure thought" and "pure intuition." But being aware that the way was pointing ever more clearly to an equation of these, he revised his first edition, when the second came due, in favor of the "traditional" judgment so that the ratio and logos should continue in their central role.<sup>222</sup>

One of the most important consequences of this choice is

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219. p. 166.      220. p. 167.      221. K. Axvii, p. 171.  
 222. p. 172f.

that Kant's analysis never rose above the objective-subjective dichotomy. Indeed, even in the first edition the analysis of pure intuition is given as the "subjective" aspect, and that of pure thought is given as the "objective."<sup>223</sup> In consequence, when seen from the point of view of the Heideggerian critique, subjectivism becomes the greater the more emphasis is placed on pure thought. For, this latter is "dependent" upon intuition. Once "transcendence," however, becomes the essence of finite pure reason, the subject-object dichotomy is transcended and objectivity and subjectivity become assured.<sup>224</sup> Such a claim, however, should give cause to wonder if this exposition of transcendence has now, in virtue of its transcendence of the subject-object relation, also transcended "finitude." Is this "human" nature of which Heidegger speaks? If so, in what does the "subjectivity" of the subject consist when transcendent?

#### 10. The Subjectivity of the Subject.

Throughout this analysis, "finitude" has been a dominant theme, but with the emergence of transcendence as the essence of human pure reason, the question of "sensibility" again comes to the fore. In what way is human pure reason as it is now formulated "sensible," i.e., finite?

Time, as the universal intuition, i.e., pure sensibility, must here be shown to "form a primordial unity with the "I think," and this, "on the basis of the transcendental imagination."<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>223</sup>. K. Axviff., p. 171.

<sup>224</sup>. p. 175.

<sup>225</sup>. p. 178.



In a word, we must show how the latter is related to time.

The previous discussion of pure intuition's relation to the imagination<sup>226</sup> was brief and to a degree obscure. It is time now to give "a specific, analytical explication of the precise manner in which time is based upon the transcendental imagination."<sup>227</sup>

The constant flux of time is apparent in the synopsis, i.e., "the pure succession of the now-series." Pure intuition "intuits" this succession, that is, it receives "that which offers itself."<sup>228</sup> But how is a "sequence" to be received? "Strictly speaking, the simple act of receiving something actually present" cannot apply to the act of receiving a now, "since each now has an essentially continuous extension" which penetrates to that now which has just now past, and to that which is just now coming. That is, with every now there is always a reference both forward and backward. Hence, "the receptive act of pure intuition must in itself give the aspect of the now," an aspect which contains this dual reference.<sup>229</sup> This dual reference, for Heidegger, explains why "pure" intuition, "which is the subject of the transcendental aesthetic, cannot be the reception of something 'present.'" Pure intuition which, as receptive, gives itself its object is by nature not relative to the presence of something, least of all to [the presence of] beings actually given."<sup>230</sup> Pure intuition, as a constitutive element of pure imagination "receives" from the latter what it

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226. See above, p. 104f.  
229. p. 179.

227. p. 178.  
230. p. 179.

228. p. 178.

transforms according to its "temporal" image, and then "gives" to any being which is "present." In so doing, it provides what is "present" with an "historical" context, if you will; it puts it into the flux or sequence of time; it puts it into perspective. But how is this done?

That which pure intuition "receives," it must be clear, is not already in the "form" of time. The strictly temporal "image" is provided by intuition itself. Nevertheless, what has been said plainly points to the act of pure intuition as arising from pure imagination in virtue of its "receptive" character. The "formative" aspect of intuition's contribution to the total act of objectification is seen most clearly in this dual reference back and ahead in the moment of objectification, i.e., in "looking at."<sup>231</sup> For, we have a "threefold way in which the act of imagination is formative" in virtue of the "image" of time provided by intuition. It "produces representations relative to the present, the past, or the future."<sup>232</sup> That is, it forms images the representations of which are present; it reproduces images the representations of which are of the past; and it anticipates images, the representations of which are of the future.<sup>233</sup> These modes of imagination will be treated in some detail forthwith, but first the ground just covered must be secured.

It is difficult to "picture" clearly in one's mind the action which has here been suggested. In the first place, when we speak of an "object" as being "present," "it" has already

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231. p. 179.

232. p. 180.

233. p. 180.



been "cut out" of its context. Therefore, we need to recall that what is now "there" has not always been there because there was a time when we were not yet aware of its "presence." So imperceptibly immersed was it in the "background" which encompasses all that is "there" (which background is not itself a "thing" of which we are conscious except when we speak of the "world," or of "everything" or "everywhere"), that it is true to say that for us it was not "there." The history of discovery illustrates this plainly. Marconi, for example, "cut out" from this background "radio waves," and made "wireless" communication possible. One could in retrospect say that such had always been possible, but until Marconi excised radio waves from this background, wireless communication was a practical impossibility.

Secondly, as regards "excision," this act, in the terms we have been using, involves the "formation" of "objects" only to the extent that a temporal-spatial cloak is thrown around them so that they can emerge from their hiding place in the background. The "cloak" surrounds them, but has nothing whatever to do with their nature or composition. It simply makes them "present" or "past" or "future" depending upon whether the action is formative, reproductive, or anticipative. The nature or composition of the objects themselves is, rather, the concern of "conceptual" thought which unifies them according to its "rule." The fact that "objects" are simultaneously isolated spatio-temporally and qualified conceptually in one unified action supports Heidegger's thesis: that the imagination is the seat of transcendence and makes objectification possible a priori.

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From this, it should be clear that the imagination, since all its images are spontaneously "temporal," "is in itself relative to time." Not only this, but it can be said to constitute (form) time originally.<sup>234</sup> For, as we have just shown, "time as pure intuition is neither only what is intuited in the pure act of intuition nor this act deprived of its 'object.'"<sup>235</sup> The temporal-spatial cloak which intuition throws around "objects" and thereby rescues them from oblivion in the background is, to be sure, never "thrown" without reference to an "object." But this latter is never what "pure" intuition intuits. "Time as pure intuition is in one the formative act of intuition and what is intuited therein."<sup>236</sup> What is intuited "therein" is time. Time is the throwing (the act) of a "temporal" cloak which is either present, past, or future (what is intuited). "Such is the complete concept of time."<sup>237</sup>

The "pure succession of the now-sequence," then, is always and only imaginative formation, reproduction, or anticipation; each determination having a reference to now, i.e., to itself. If the act is formative, then, the imagination is presently

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234. p. 180.

235. p. 180.

236. p. 180.

237. p. 180. We must say here that this "complete concept" of time is just that: transcendent Dasein's concept of the "phenomenon of time," to which Heidegger alludes in his Introduction to Being and Time (p. 55) when he says that phenomenology penetrates even to space and time. That transcendence which has been expounded is the transcendence of all possible "objects;" it does not transcend finitude. As finite, i.e., receptive, Dasein is always open to that Time which transcends all existence and all ex-sistence, and renders these "finite." This Time is identical with Being and Nothing, and, as the "horizon of all possible unity," is not only ontically future, it is, relative to all phenomena, ever-future, eternally future. For more on this, see below Chapters V onwards.



forming; if it is reproductive, then, it is presently reproducing; and if it is anticipative, then, it is presently anticipating. The "now" of the now-sequence adheres to each action (determination) because all actions are oriented relative to the actor. This will become clear as we proceed. The point to hold in mind now is that the imagination, which has been demonstrated to be the essence of transcendence and the root of the two elements it unites in pure synthesis, "constitutes primordial time,"<sup>238</sup> i.e., "phenomenal" time.

The three elements of pure knowledge, intuition, imagination, and reflection, are essentially three modes of synthesis which, in view of the temporality of all representations, are therefore apprehension, reproduction, and recognition.<sup>239</sup> These variants of the terms we have just been using (formation, reproduction, and anticipation) arise as variants precisely because some distinction is required between the imaginative acts of intuition, the discussion of which introduced the latter terms, and the imaginative acts of imagination and reflection. The discussion is now to center upon the pure synthesis, the root of the two stems. Its behavior is characterized by "apprehension," "reproduction," and "recognition." Confusion is almost impossible to avoid in what follows unless we realize that what we are doing is demonstrating the "cross-reference" which must apply if the pure synthesis is indeed the "root" and unification of the other two elements. That is, the pure synthesis must be

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238. p. 181.

239. pp. 181-84.

shown to be pure intuition when acting as pure apprehension, pure imagination when acting as pure reproduction, and pure thought when acting as pure recognition. We begin with the pure synthesis as pure intuition: apprehension.

Pure intuition has been characterized as time as this latter is manifest in the "synopsis" of the "now-sequence." This manifold, in virtue of the now's dual reference backward and forward, is "synthetic" in the sense that it is a mani-fold which is intuited, all aspects of which are given at once.<sup>240</sup> This immediate formation of a manifold "image" gathers within its purview "now this," "now that," and "now all this at once," each "now..." being one of a continuing "succession of now's." Intuition of this manifold is the "apprehension" of the present now in its backward or forward relation to other now's within the purview of this now-sequence. Thus, all three dimensions of time can be said to be intuited immediately when apprehension "singles out" this present now. That is, time is intuited in all its aspects when the present now is apprehended in the spontaneous act of forming the now. Apprehension, then, creates or "produces at each instant the aspect of the actual present as such."<sup>241</sup> Therefore, it is "time-forming," an act of pure imagination, i.e., pure synthesis.

All of the now's in the now-sequence which have either a backward or forward relation to the present now (just apprehended) have their validity in terms either of reproduction or recog-

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<sup>240</sup>. p. 184f.

<sup>241</sup>. p. 185.



nition. We consider next the pure synthesis as reproduction.

The memory is such that the "image" of something once perceived can be "recalled" in its absence providing that it has not been dropped from thought altogether, i.e., forgotten.<sup>242</sup> A recalled image has all of the validity that it did when it was originally intuited. Recalling, then, as an act, is the "reproduction" of an image in the mode of immediate perception even though the thing it represents in its reproduction is no longer present. As such, it is an act of unification, that is, its representation is united with "presence" even in absence. This means that such temporal determinations as "earlier" or "in the past" must be distinguished by the mind as essentially different from actual presence, else reproduction would differ in no way from apprehension. Apprehension, as we have seen, apprehends the present, all other now's being either earlier or later. If an image is recalled in a reproduction, then, this act must be "apprehended" as "reproducing." Reproduction, then, has the temporal distinction of "the presence of the past" because, as an apprehension, it is now-reproducing, as distinct from now-apprehending.

Apprehension was seen to be primarily intuitive. It should be apparent that the imagination plays the central role in reproduction with its capacity to make "as present" what is in fact absent. "Pure synthesis in the mode of reproduction forms the past as such."<sup>243</sup> And in unification with apprehension, it

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<sup>242</sup>. p. 166.

<sup>243</sup>. p. 187.

brings about the temporal orientation requisite to objectification. "If this original unity of both modes of synthesis did not exist, 'not even the purest and most elementary representations of space and time could arise.'"<sup>244</sup>

But what of the mode of synthesis which "forms" the future? Or, as Heidegger puts it, "How is pure thought, the ego of pure apperception, to have a temporal character...?"<sup>245</sup> The answer to this has already been implicit in the explanations of both apprehension and reproduction. For, unification as such has figured in a major way. In the case of apprehension, we saw the unity of the manifold as a "single" intuition with its constitutive elements (earlier and later now's), the present apprehension of now being that which orients the others.

And, in reproduction we saw the unification of a former image, that is, its validation as "present." And furthermore, we saw both these moments in unity with each other (as the apprehension of the now in now-reproducing). It is important to see how "recognition" plays its part in both these "time-forming" acts.

In the first action, apprehension of the now presupposes that each now is precisely as the former was. That is, it must have about it the unique quality of "presence." In every determination of the now, there is recognition of the former's unique quality.<sup>246</sup> And this "recognition" is the rule of unity with...., an instance of conceptual "rule:" the one which applies to many.

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<sup>244</sup>. p. 188 (K. A102).

<sup>245</sup>. p. 189.

<sup>246</sup>. p. 190.



In the second, reproduction presupposes recognition in the relation between the recalled image and its actual presence - again, the rule of unity. Then, in the relation between apprehension and reproduction, we also encountered unity: that of the two modes of time-forming synthesis, each in its own way relative to the one unique present now. Since conceptual rule is "self-conscious" apperception, "this unitary consciousness is what combines the manifold, successively intuited and thereupon also reproduced, into one representation."<sup>247</sup> The rule of unity, operative throughout, effects a "closed field" within which these two modes of synthesis "can fix and receive as being that which they bring back or encounter."<sup>248</sup>

The "identification" of the now as now, and of a reproduction as true, requires the rule of unity as that which "recognizes" itself in the way that pure thought has been explicated as pure apperception: "I think...." In order for "identification," however, to function throughout the whole thought process, the unity with which it is to govern must be provided sooner than these functions which presuppose it. This means prior both to the now and the now-past. Recognition, then, is based upon the self-identification of the whole horizon of unity in general, i.e., upon the future as the horizon of all possible unity.<sup>249</sup>

It is this horizon of all possible unity which is recognized and apprehended as now, and which is recognized and reproduced as now-past. Recognition of, or identification with, the horizon

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<sup>247</sup>. K. A103, p. 191.

<sup>248</sup>. p. 191.

<sup>249</sup>. p. 191.

of possible unity, i.e., with the future, i.e., with the perspective of the pro-position which is always "in advance," i.e., with the constant, ever-renewing source from which all else arises - unity with this possibility of unity, of objectification, of truth - is the only possible mode of unification which has built-in resistance to contamination or distortion by the variety of what-is or what-has-been. The future is one, and common to all; whereas we are many. Hence, the number of now's is equal to our number, and the number of then's (now's-past) is beyond number. The one which rules the many, then, can only be "future."

It should now be apparent that...

"Although it first appeared fruitless, even absurd, to attempt to explain the internal formation of pure concepts by considering them as being essentially determined by time, we have now not only brought to light the temporal character of the third mode of synthesis but have also shown that this mode as pure pre-formation, insofar as its internal structure is concerned, enjoys a priority over the other two, with which last, nevertheless, it is essentially connected. Is it not evident, then, that the ... analysis of pure synthesis in concepts ... reveals the most primordial essence of time, that is, that it temporalizes itself out of the future?"<sup>250</sup>

Because pure sensibility, i.e., time, has now been revealed to penetrate every aspect of pure reason - even to the extent of enabling conceptual thought - the transcendental imagination in turn has been revealed to be "capable of forming and sustaining the unity and primordial totality of the specific finitude of the human subject, which last has been presented as pure, sensible reason."<sup>251</sup> But, do not time and pure reason "remain

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250. p. 191f.

251. p. 192.



absolutely heterogeneous"? Is not the concept of pure, sensible reason self-contradictory? Until the selfhood of the self is shown to be intrinsically temporal, i.e., "not limited in its temporal character to the way in which it is empirically apprehended," time and pure reason will remain heterogeneous.<sup>252</sup>

Heidegger chooses to demonstrate the intrinsic unity of these two not by way of a proof that the self is temporal, but quite the reverse: by showing that time has the character of selfhood. That is, the subjectivity of the subject will be shown to be pure self-affection, and this latter to be time.<sup>253</sup> The key to this analysis has been provided in the citation above, namely, that "selfhood ... is ... not limited in its temporal character to the way in which it is empirically apprehended."

We begin with "objectification," the act which has been shown to be necessarily affected by time.<sup>254</sup> If this "act" is affected by time, then we, whose act it is, are ourselves affected by it. But how? Rather than attempt to recapitulate Heidegger's very abstruse explanation, we will use formulas already given in order to effect the same end.

If the self is the actor in the act of objectification, then, this act and its agent, should they be objectified, will always be "objects" - never subjects. The act of objectification always implies the subject whose act it is: a subject who transcends what is objectified to the extent that he makes possible

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<sup>252</sup>. p. 192.

<sup>253</sup>. p. 193.

<sup>254</sup>. p. 193f.

a priori this act. Always he is prior to what he objectifies. Therefore, when the self is objectified, another self is presupposed. This "other" self, the agent himself, is always prior to, i.e., ahead, or out in "front" of, what he "looks at."

Now, if what he "looks at" is said to be "present," then, where is the agent who is prior to this "presence" unless he is in its future? Certainly he is not in its past. The self-affection which we saw in our analysis of pure thought (viz., where unity, because of its peculiar ambiguity, recognizes itself in the rule of the one which applies to many), once this structure is seen to be "temporal," can then be said to derive from the future as the horizon of all possible unity. It follows that if unity is future and fundamental to self-affection, then, the self-affection which constitutes the subject, and which is always prior to its act of knowledge, is "of" this horizon of all possible unity. That is, the self is future; it is always ahead of "itself" (this latter being the objectified self). Furthermore, if the self is a unity, and the key to conceptual thought is the unity which governs all "possible" unities, then, the self is future and time is its pure self-affection.<sup>255</sup>

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255. From this conclusion we can go beyond Heidegger and show how it necessarily applies to "objects" as well. If "objects" are considered to be unitary, i.e., to exist "as such," then are not they "of" the future too? This argument harks back to Kant's distinction between "appearances" and the "thing-in-itself" which we earlier suggested was an attempt to come to grips with "relativity." Every apprehension of "unity" in the "world," in the light of the above argument, is necessarily an apprehension of the "possibility" of unity which is future. Therefore, every single "object," when apprehended "singly," is relative and therefore not fully defined "as such." All that can be said is



We cannot speak, therefore, of the "temporality" of the "self," i.e., we cannot discuss whether it is temporal or eternal, if, as it turns out, the self, as pure self-affection, is itself time, and "only as such in its very essence is it possible at all."<sup>256</sup> Nor is it proper to speak of the "temporality" or "atemporality" of time. "The primordial essence of time as pure self-affection must be taken as our guide."<sup>257</sup> Thus, when we see that "the self originally and in its inmost essence is time itself," then, we can conclude finally that "pure sensibility (time) and pure reason are not only homogeneous, they belong together in the unity of the same essence which makes possible the finitude of human subjectivity."<sup>258</sup>

#### 11. Metaphysics, Dasein, and Fundamental Ontology.

Thus we come to the end of our course: the laying of the foundation of metaphysics in its basic originality. Heidegger's interpretation of Kant has gone beyond what Kant himself explicitly specifies, but stays, nevertheless, within the limits of the implications contained in the text of the Critique. In this interpretation we have seen how...

"Kant's laying of the foundation of metaphysics leads to the transcendental imagination. This is the common root of both stems, sensibility and understanding. As such, it makes pos-

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that its essence is being gradually revealed in history. It is "coming-to-be" in the same way that the self (not the empirical self) is always ahead of itself in a pro-position, i.e., in the future, which latter is the horizon of all possible unity, and always is not yet...

<sup>256</sup>. p. 198                      <sup>257</sup>. p. 199.

<sup>258</sup>. p. 201. This statement confirms our contention that "time" for Heidegger is itself "phenomenal" in the sense of being "finite."

sible the original unity of the ontological synthesis. This root itself, however, is implanted in primordial time. The primordial ground which is revealed ... is time."<sup>259</sup>

Since Kant's Critique "begins with metaphysica generalis and so becomes a question as to the possibility of ontology in general," it necessarily "concerns the essence of the ontological constitution of beings, i.e., Being in general."<sup>260</sup> Our conclusion, then, based on time, juxtaposes Being and time: significantly enough, the title of Heidegger's "major" work. This work presupposes the above analysis, at least in its general conformations, and is set out as a "repetition" of it.<sup>261</sup> By "repetition," Heidegger means: "the disclosure of the primordial possibilities concealed" in this problem. "The development of these possibilities has the effect of transforming the problem and thus preserving it in its import as a problem."<sup>262</sup>

Now, the establishment of the ground of metaphysics is, we have found, "an interrogation of man, i.e., it is anthropology."<sup>263</sup> And carried out in this way, this anthropology is to be considered "pure anthropology" because it is based not on empirical criteria, but on those criteria which are a priori. Hence, it is "philosophical anthropology."<sup>264</sup> The term "philosophical anthropology," in contexts apart from this one, has a manifest ambiguity. Indeed, Heidegger concludes that the history of anthropological investigation is so spotted with inherent ambiguity that if the science of man is to be clarified, someone must set his mind to do it; the task remains to be done.

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<sup>259</sup>. p. 207.

<sup>260</sup>. p. 207.

<sup>261</sup>. p. 208.

<sup>262</sup>. p. 211.

<sup>263</sup>. p. 213.

<sup>264</sup>. pp. 213ff.



His own investigations have revealed that finitude is the decisive characteristic of man and therefore of anthropology. There remains, then, only the problem of determining this finitude anthropologically, i.e., in an analysis of Dasein.<sup>265</sup>

"The problem of the laying of the foundation of metaphysics is rooted in the question of the Dasein in man, i.e., in the question of his ultimate ground, which is the comprehension of Being as essentially existent finitude. ... Insofar as the Being of this being lies in existence, the question as to the essence of Dasein is an existential one. Every question relative to the Being of beings ... is metaphysics."<sup>266</sup>

We have before us, then, the question of the metaphysics of Dasein which is philosophical anthropology, i.e., fundamental ontology. If this latter is explicated in such a way that the finitude of man is revealed to be "temporality," then this anthropology squares with the results of the laying of the foundation of metaphysics in its basic originality, and the vital relations between these three heretofore diverse disciplines will have been shown to be that of unity.

## 12. Remarks.

Only in a very summary way, and therefore inadequately, have we suggested the nature of the "repetition" of the laying of the foundation of metaphysics in its basic originality, but sufficiently, nonetheless, to indicate what, at bottom, is involved in Being and Time in terms of its relation to this analysis. For our part, only the barest hint is sufficient, for there have been allusions all along the way, not only to Being and Time but to other works as well which, when this "Interpre-

tation" was written, were yet to be fully articulated. These allusions, as we shall see, are expanded by Heidegger, and together with this analysis come to constitute a frame of thought which contains within it the seeds, so to speak, of all the ramifications of philosophy as can appropriately be entertained.

We should point out again that in the course of this analysis we have ourselves "interpreted" in an effort to make some of the apparent obscurity less opaque. In so doing, we have introduced an emphasis which does not appear as such in Heidegger: the emphasis upon unity. It would be a gross misrepresentation to say that "unity" is not of great significance in his analysis, but he has not utilized it to the same extent: that its relation to time is made more explicit. This, however, rather than being a misrepresentation, is but to make explicit what is implicit, and to close the circle, as it were, yet more tightly. With unity more in the center of things, the analysis comes closer to realizing the aim entertained by Kant, no less than by Heidegger, that metaphysica generalis should utilize the analytic procedures appropriate to mathematics, a discipline devoid for the most part of emotional overtones, and prone therefore to be subjective.<sup>267</sup>

If this emphasis upon unity and its relation to time can be accepted as a legitimate interpretation of this important work, then we are content, indeed, happy to endorse it with the one qualification which we suggested earlier (fn. 237), namely, that the "time" which Heidegger here expounds is "primordial time" only in the sense that it is the primordial phenomenon



of time. The "subjectivity of the subject" he has rightly shown to be "the self-affection of time," but this finite subject's "future" stance relative to all that he "objectifies" points to a futurity which is in advance yet of this finitude and "determines" it to be finite. This Future we will later be suggesting is "always future," "ever-future." It is this Time which is, truly "primordial" and which "grounds" the "phenomenon." Of this Time, however, we know nothing beyond the fact that it is "revealed" by means of this phenomenon of time within the "subjectivity of the subject" as self-affection. This analysis, then, has its validity and importance in demonstrating what could be termed "natural revelation" in the sense that Time is perceived by the "subject," i.e., Dasein, and, in consequence, all men are aware of Time's priority, and bear witness to it in their "concern" and "respect" for the "phenomenon" of time. In this connection, Heidegger's analysis of "Being-towards-Death" in Being and Time is an apt illustration of just "how" both the concept of unity and that of time (as a "stretch") contribute to the "historicality" of Dasein and of the "world" which it "projects."

We proceed now to expound Heidegger's little book, The Essence of Ground, and to disclose in a formal way what we have suggested here only in passing.

## Chapter IV

## "The Essence of Ground"

## 1. Introduction

Both this essay and "What is Metaphysics?" first appeared as public lectures in 1928. The Essence of Ground<sup>1</sup> was published the following year. The Preface to its unaltered third edition of 1949 explains briefly its relation to the famous inaugural lecture. "The Essence of Ground" considers the "ontological difference," that is, the "not" (Nicht) "between beings and Being."<sup>2</sup> Being is not a being, nor is any being itself Being, not even the totality of beings. This negative identity, indeed, this instance of non-identity occasions in the inaugural lecture consideration of the Nothing (Nichts) as co-original with Being. That is to say, all beings have their ultimate ground in Being, but this latter is "differentiated" from its dis-essence, i.e., Nothing. Yet, because Being is prior to beings, and Nothing is prior to things, all beings can be said to have their ultimate origin both in Being and Nothing. Now, the Nothing is not the nihil negativum;<sup>3</sup> rather, it is the positive source from which all content derives. Its seeming "negative" character arises from our finite human propensity to award ultimate meaning to ontical, i.e., "historical," truth. Yet it is precisely the problem of the "relativity" of all ontic knowledge that makes ontology so fundamental a concern for Heidegger. If ontic beings are seen to be manifest, i.e., "there," that is,

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1. Vom Wesen des Grundes, Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt, 1919. hereafter referred to in this chapter simply by page number.

2. p. 5.

3. p. 5.



if selfhood is deemed to be "here and now" and this "presence" is a correlative of the "there and then," i.e., history, then this "positive" affirmation of ontic phenomena requires that "negation" characterize that which is not ontic. If, as we shall see, primacy should belong to Being and to its dis-essence which is Nothing, that is, to the future, then Being and Nothing should be accorded the positive value as "proving" all ontic beings including the "self." The question of "the ontological difference" gains ascendancy as that discussion which paves the way for an ultimate reorientation towards..., or an openness towards..., a re-evaluation of that which defines human Dasein as "finite" and therefore problematic, namely, freedom, transcendence: the truth of Being (which is its "oblivion" in "dis-essence," i.e., Nothing).

Heidegger begins his discussion of the essence of ground with an allusion to Aristotle's analysis of the meaning of the word ἀρχή, origin, basis. Here we find disclosed what Heidegger terms "grounds" (Gründe). They are: 1. "essence" (Was-sein), what beings in fact "are;" 2. "existence" (Dass-sein), the fact that beings "are;" and 3. "truth" (Wahr-sein), the truth of their being as they in fact "are." This tri-partite rendering of ἀρχή, however, appears along side another attempt to disclose "ground." But Aristotle finds four basic "causes," and these fairly dominate the ensuing history of "metaphysics" and "logic."<sup>4</sup> The relation between these two efforts at grounding, however, remain obscure. Moreover, what is common to them, the one

ground from which these seven arise, is not apparent.

Leibniz deals with the "problem of ground" in his "principle of sufficient reason."<sup>5</sup> Crusius and Schopenhauer, in turn, also grapple with it, the former, in his dissertation of 1743, actually calling it "the principle of ground" (der Satz vom Grunde), perhaps for the first time.<sup>6</sup> But it is only with Kant that the problem is raised to the prominence Heidegger believes it deserves, but then, in an ambiguous way. It lies at the very heart of his "Critique of Pure Reason" but is of genuine interest in the whole of his philosophy only at the beginning and end.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, Schelling does not treat the problem as such at all. There is, then, some question as to whether the "problem of ground" is ever adequately treated at all, and especially in the "principle of ground."<sup>8</sup> In that case, it is no doubt appropriate to raise the question of ground, especially if new insight should result from a more thoroughgoing analysis, one that takes into account dis-essence (Unwesen) as well as essence.<sup>9</sup> For, is not the knowledge of essence made possible by a corresponding knowledge of what it is not?

"The 'principle of ground' from the outset appears to defend something like a problem of ground as a 'supreme principle.' Does, then, the 'principle of ground' assert something about the ground as such? Does it, indeed, illuminate the essence of ground as the highest principle?"<sup>10</sup>

Not so! It asserts, rather, concerning "beings:" that each has something like "ground." But is the essence of this "ground" itself ever specified?

5. p. 7.  
9. p. 8.

6. p. 7f.  
10. p. 9.

7. p. 8.

8. p. 8.



Leibniz contends that the "principle of sufficient reason" has its origin in "natural truth."<sup>11</sup> But Heidegger finds that Leibniz' understanding of "natural truth" is that of "propositional truth." The relation of subject to predicate is one of identity, not in the sense of sameness, but rather in the sense of a union of those things which belong together, are homogenous or correlative. Therefore, "truths" - true assertions - take their nature from a relation to something on the basis of which (auf Grund wovon) this uninimity is possible."<sup>12</sup> The problems of ground and truth are therefore related.

But both problems presuppose, as it were, the accessibility of the beings about which assertions are made and alleged to be true. They assume that these beings are already manifest. These problems can, therefore, be said to be "rooted in a truth more primordial" than that ontic or propositional truth which assumes "unconcealment" (Unverborgenheit).<sup>13</sup> That is, they are "rooted" in "concealment" or ontological truth. For, "... the illumination of Being first makes possible the manifestation of beings."<sup>14</sup> If beings are said to be already manifest, then Being is not; it is concealed.

Now, the term "ontology" is ambiguous. Pre-ontological understanding appears to be common to all men as an implicit knowledge of Being, whereas ontological knowledge, the explicit knowledge of Being, is gained, if at all, only after considerable effort. Only ontologists endeavor to explicate Being. Natural scientists, on the other hand, presuppose a knowledge of Being without ever bringing it

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11. p. 10f.

12. p. 11.

13. p. 12.

14. p. 13.







to express determination. Therefore, the basis for all of their calculations and measurements is an implicit "grasp of Being" (Seins-verständnis). Thus, pre-ontological knowledge has its express determination in ontical knowledge. For, ontical truth is concerned with beings (their Being merely implied) whereas ontological truth is concerned to explicate that Being which is implied in beings.<sup>15</sup> Thus, ontic and ontological truth are correlative in virtue of the "distinction between Being and beings (ontological difference)."<sup>16</sup> This "difference" must possess, or be possessed by, the ground of this difference. "This ground of the ontological difference we anticipate to be the transcendence of Dasein."<sup>17</sup>

Thus Heidegger finds that Leibniz' principle of sufficient reason betrays both a definite idea of Being which he does not explicate, and a reliance upon the common, almost vulgar, notion of truth as "propositional truth." Nor does he ground these notions sufficiently. Indeed, Kant is the first to demonstrate the connection between "ground" and "Being." Heidegger himself summarizes for us:

"The short statement of the Leibnizian deduction of the principle of ground from the essence of truth should make clear the connection of the problem of ground with the question of the inner possibility of the ontological truth which issues in the yet more primordial and therefore all-encompassing question of the essence of transcendence."<sup>18</sup>

Transcendence, then, is to be shown to be the domain (Bezirk) of the question as to the essence of ground.

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15. p. 14f. This distinction is crucial for our temporal analysis. Pre-ontological knowledge contains an implicit knowledge of Being all the while that it endeavors to gain ontical knowledge, i.e., a knowledge of beings. Ontological knowledge, on the other hand, is an explicit knowledge of Being all the while presupposing the the implicit relation of beings to Being. These two disciplines  
(continued on p. 133a)







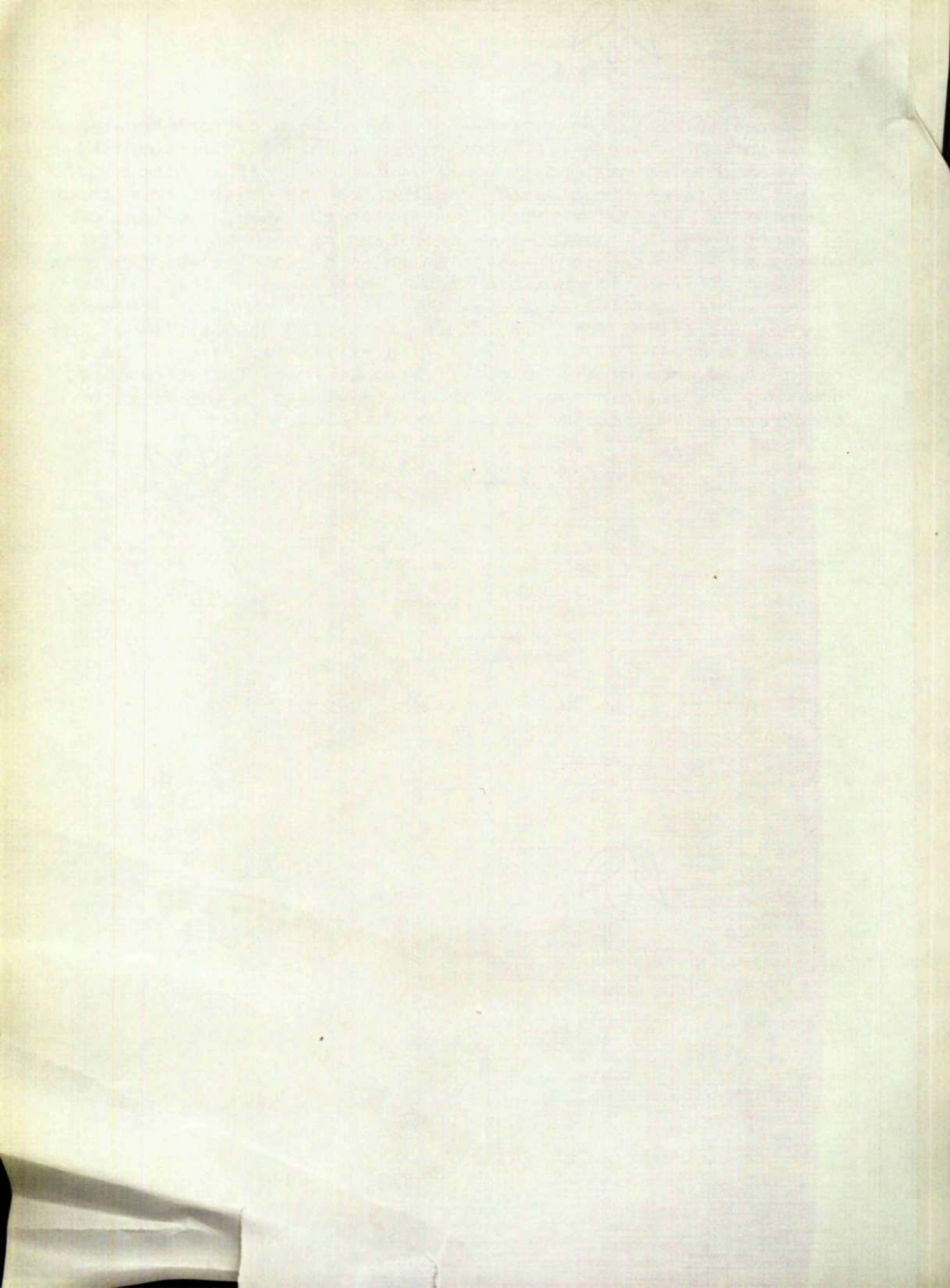
are mutually exclusive in terms of time. When ontical knowledge is sought, pre-ontological knowledge (of Being) is presupposed. And when ontological knowledge is sought, ontical knowledge (of beings) is taken for granted. Neither can be considered without the other serving as an implicit reference. When, however, one attempts to gain a perspective transcending both of these disciplines so as to see their relation to each other as we have done, yet another position has been taken in advance of them, so to speak. This position is the ex-position which thought achieves thereby indicating something of the transcendent position of the thinker himself, viz., in ex-sisting existence, that is, in a realm in advance of all objectification. These latter remarks, however, are anticipatory and should be viewed in the light of the "reversal" discussed in Chapter VI below.

16. p. 15.

17. p. 15.

18. p. 17.







## 2. Transcendence

How can the "question of transcendence" be shown to be the key approach-road to the essence of ground? The term "transcendence" refers to a phenomenon which can, for the most part, be characterized as a spatial "over-leap" (Überstieg) of such beings as are encountered around about. It bespeaks "a relation which extends 'from' something 'to' something."<sup>19</sup> Hence, that which is over-leaped rightly belongs to the relation as its "terminus" (woraufzu).<sup>20</sup> But the clearest and most decisive aspect of transcendence as a relation is not its "terminus" but its source, i.e., the person who initiates this over-leap, the one who himself does the leaping, namely, human Dasein. Transcendence is the "fundamental disposition" (Grundverfassung) of human Dasein; that is, it is the fundamental mode of all the Dasein's relations; it even makes possible its own existence as a "self."<sup>21</sup> Therefore, it is not appropriate to speak of a "subject" who becomes transcendent in an over-leap to "objects," for, "subjectivity" itself presupposes this over-leap. Transcendence is prior both to subjectivity and objectivity, subject and object; it makes both possible as such.

"In the over-leap, the Dasein first encounters such beings as it is; that is, it first encounters its own 'self.' Transcendence constitutes selfhood."<sup>22</sup> And in so doing, it enables the Dasein at the same time to meet what it is not, for, "difference" is inherent in the recognition of the "self" as self.

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19. p. 17.

20. p. 17.

21. p. 17.

22. p. 15.

Now, it is imperative to note that when the self is constituted, it is as a totality, a unity, a whole being: the self "as such." It follows, then, that the over-leap always happens in wholeness, and not just occasionally, but all of the time.<sup>23</sup>

Also to be noted is that the Dasein is not that whereupon the leap succeeds; it is not the "self" that is encountered in the constitution of the self.<sup>24</sup> The self that is encountered, as well as all other "objects" which "differ" from it, is "other" than the Dasein which, in transcendence, leaps over to... these terminae. The "self" is "objectified" to an extent no less than other "objects."

Thirdly, it is essential that the existence of that which is encountered in transcendence be understood as preceding the leap.<sup>25</sup> That is, nothing can be met in the leap which is not already "there," i.e., manifest, or, more precisely, is available to the objectification that inevitably occurs in transcendence.

If these points are clear, then the question arises as to the nature of the "terminus" whereupon the Dasein transcends. All of the beings over-leaped, including the "self," are themselves unities; but, is there a single terminus which will gather up all individual unities into one? Heidegger maintains that this single terminus is the "world," that transcendence is best characterized as "being-in-the-world" (In-der-Welt-sein), and that this term is therefore a "transcendental."<sup>26</sup> He intends

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23. p. 19.

24. p. 19.

25. p. 19.

26. p. 19.



by "transcendental" - as Kant did - that an essentially "critical" orientation be understood, one that transcends the relativities of history, one that is "open" to the very last, i.e., is never ever fully determined "as such." It is therefore oriented toward "possibilities" as well as to "facts." "Being-in-the-world" is intended to be larger-than-life, to over-leap all experience.<sup>27</sup> In consequence of the "difference," then, transcendence as being-in-the-world enables the Dasein to have ontic knowledge, i.e., knowledge of what is not transcendent, knowledge of "what" is transcended.

When "being-in-the-world" is construed as the meaning of transcendence, Dasein is always implied. But when the objectified Dasein is understood here - as one who takes refuge, so to speak, with all the beings which constitute the totality of beings, i.e., the ontic world - then this objectified Dasein is merely a being among beings and not "transcendence." As "one among many," the Dasein may or may not exist "as such," i.e., it is mortal, finite, can die and no longer be "amongst" the beings. Strictly speaking, this "objectified" Dasein is not Dasein. When rightly understood, Dasein is transcendence; it transcends even this objectified "self."<sup>28</sup> As transcendence, Dasein is always existing precisely because it abides in the realm of possi-

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27. p. 19.

28. In his later writings, Heidegger clears up this ambiguity by differentiating between the transcending, existing Dasein and that ontical Dasein which may or may not be "alive" by designating the former as Da-sein. This transition will already have taken place by the time the revised lecture, "The Essence of Truth," is published in 1963 (see Chapter VI below). Despite this ambiguity, we follow Heidegger's usage in the texts being expounded.



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bility as a "transcendental." In consequence, the concept of Dasein is both ontological and ontical. When so conceived, being-in-the-world, as inferring this transcendental Dasein, is likewise transcendental, i.e., ontological. Hence, "world" is to be understood ontologically.<sup>29</sup> But what does this mean?

At this point Heidegger presents a brief history of the word "world" in order to show how, with the pre-Socratic philosophers at least, the term κόσμος had what he considers to be an "ontological" character. That is, it gathered within its compass more than the mere totality of ontical beings of which these Greeks were aware. He begins with Parmenides, and moves very quickly to Heracleitus. When he comes to the New Testament writers, however, he finds an appreciable change in its meaning. He continues to trace its meaning down through the years, touching on the early church fathers, Augustine, the medieval scholastics, Aquinas, the "school" metaphysicians, and finally Kant who he sees as wresting from it something of its original "transcendental," i.e., ontological, character.

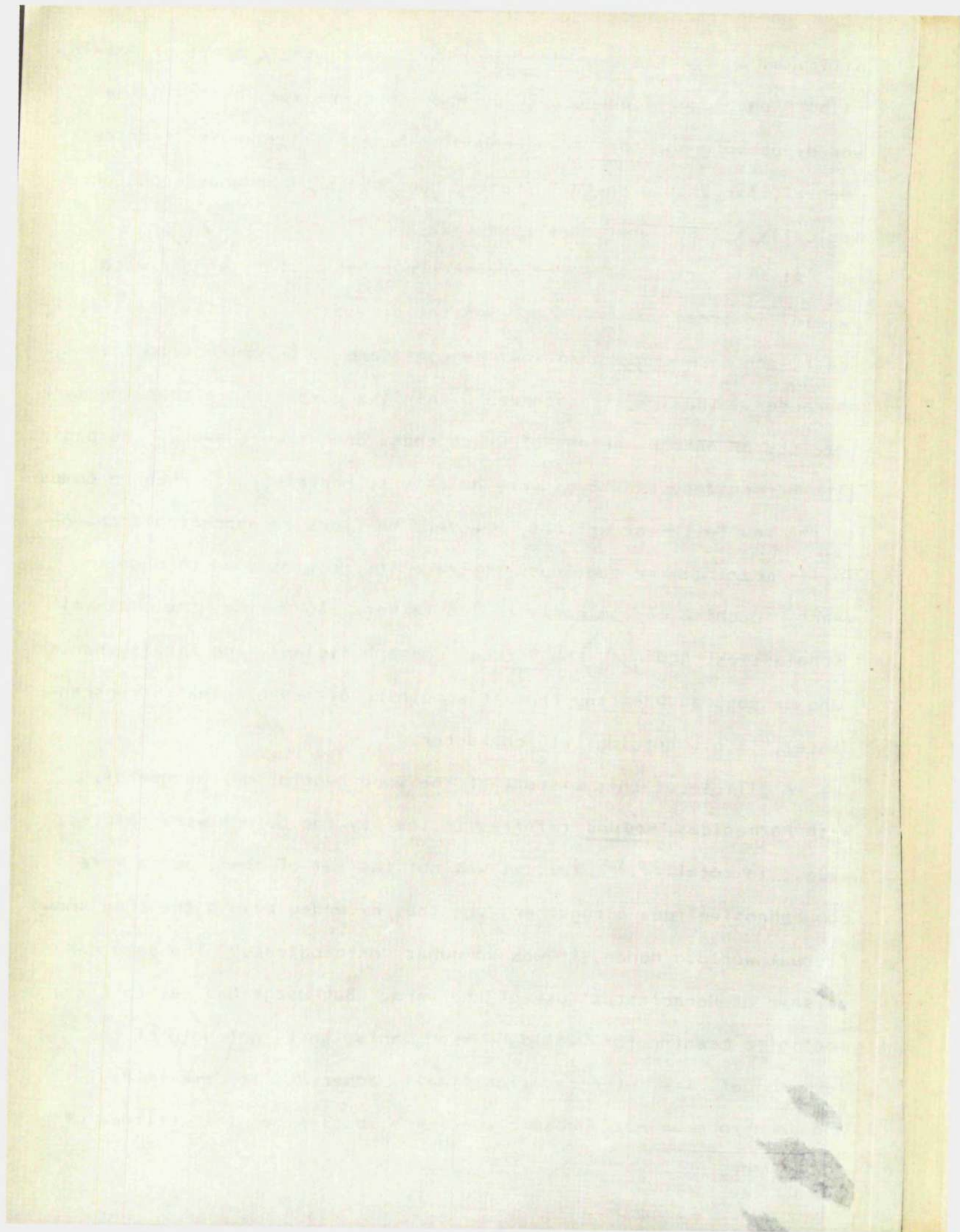
A glimpse at this history of the word "world" may be useful. With Parmenides, κόσμος referred to the way the beings were related, i.e., in totality.<sup>30</sup> Yet, it was not the sum of them, but a more comprehensive idea altogether, one that extended beyond the then known factual world. Hence, it was somewhat "ontological." The same can be said of Heracleitus' use of the term. But usage had yet to fix a definite meaning for "world." When Christianity got hold of the term, a definite interpretation finally adhered. It came in Paul and John to mean not a cosmic condition, but rather the attitude of

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29. p. 20f.

30. p. 22.







men. Those who love the world cannot also love God. "Κόσμος οὗτος intends the human Dasein in a definite 'historical' existence in contradistinction to another which is already dawning (αἰὼν ὁ μέλλων)<sup>31</sup> As an "anthropological" conception, κόσμος came to mean the antithesis of Jesus, the Son of God, who for his part functioned as life (ζωή), truth (ἀλήθεια), and light (φῶς).<sup>32</sup>

This biblical interpretation of "world" is unmistakable in Augustine and Aquinas. Augustine occasionally intends the whole "created" universe, but at other times, the inhabitants of the world.<sup>33</sup> And to this latter interpretation adhered "the specific

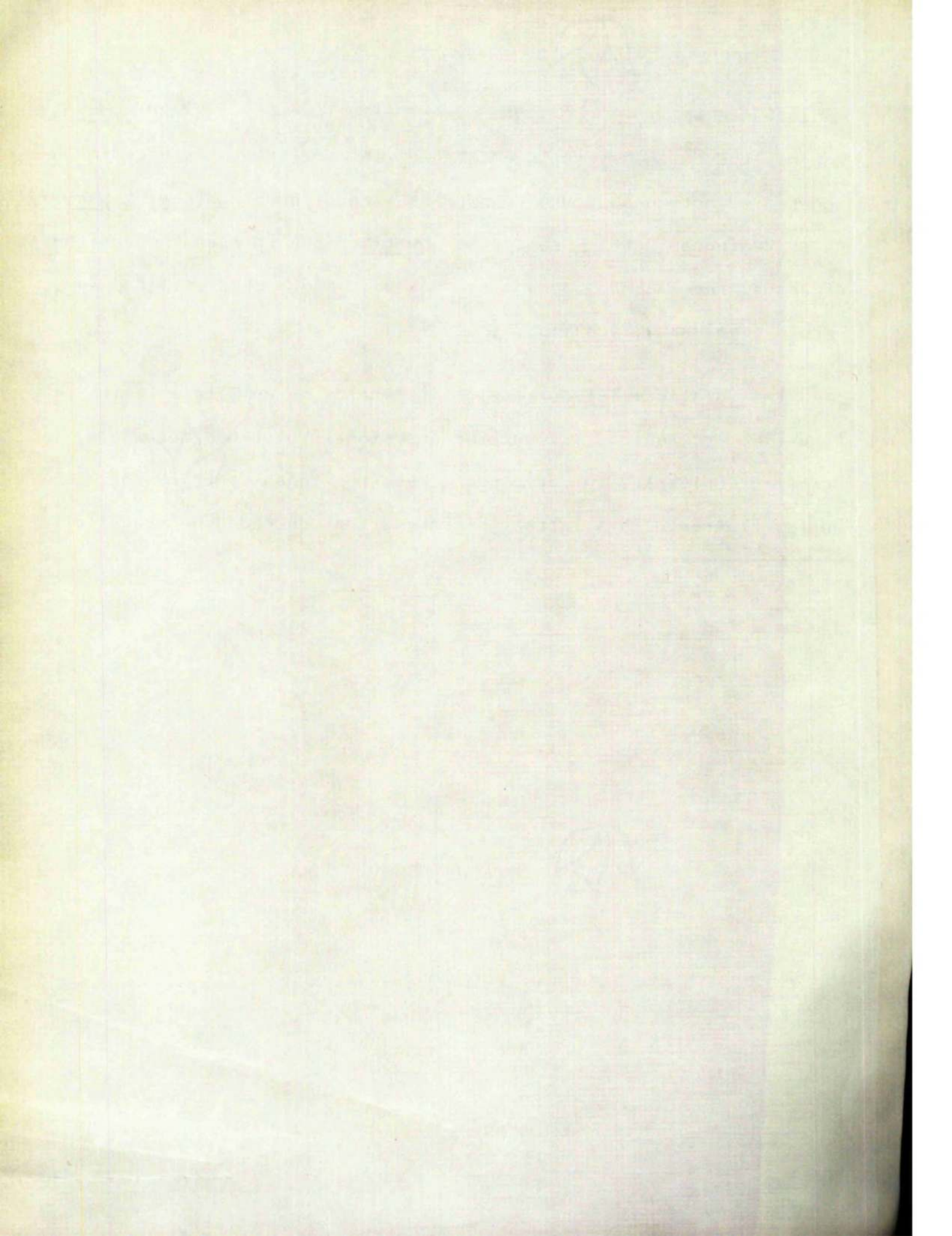
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31. p. 23

32. p. 23.

33. p. 23f.





existentiell sense of dilectores mundi, impii, carnales."<sup>34</sup>

In consequence, the history of western thought (abendländische Geistesgeschichte) was affected by this biblical construct. Indeed, Aquinas, continuing this distinction, introduced terms which are still current: "secular" and "sacred" (spirituales).<sup>35</sup>

The "school" metaphysicians, e.g., Baumgarten and Crusius, identified "world" with the totality of "created beings," but made this totality contingent upon "the understanding of the essence and possibility of the proof of God." That is, the world was set over against God himself.<sup>36</sup> When the "creation" is thus taken to be necessary, then it is to be expected that the "'doctrine of world' in the whole of subsequent metaphysics is subordinated in both ontology (the doctrine of the essence and the most universal distinction of things in general) and 'theoretical Natural Theology.'"<sup>37</sup>

Over against this tradition, Kant attempted to "lay the foundation," i.e., to "ground" the whole of metaphysics in his Critique. His approach turned on the premise that...

"...the finitude of the things at hand is not to be determined on the basis of an ontical proof of their creation by God, but is rather to be explicated from the point of view that they must first of all be given as already present if they are to be considered as possible objects of finite cognition."<sup>38</sup>

That which finite cognition intuits is termed "appearance" in contrast to the non-relative, i.e., absolute, "thing-in-itself:" the object of absolute intuition. The unity of the inter-related "appearances," i.e., the ontical "world," is determined by

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34. p. 24.  
35. p. 27.

35. p. 25.

36. p. 25.

37. p. 27.



means of synthetic cognition a priori. And this latter is made possible as we have seen, by the intuition of "time."<sup>39</sup> In consequence, we find a blending, if you will, of the ontic and ontological in the concept "world." For, though its "image" is that of "totality" or "completion," an "ontological" conception which always exceeds our best efforts to realize practically, its "content" cannot fail to include all such ontically perceived beings as we are wont to determine by means of finite intuition. The term "world," then, is synonymous with what Heidegger earlier termed the "ontological difference," but is at once more concrete and therefore more transcendental; hence, more appropriate. He summarizes the matter in this way:

"The concept 'world' is ... a transcendental (ontological) aggregate (Inbegriff) of things as appearances. In it ... is represented a subordination of the conditioned [units] of the synthesis 'in an order ascending' to the unconditional. It ... is an idea, i.e., it is defined as a pure, synthetic concept of reason in distinction from the concepts of the understanding."<sup>40</sup>

In other words, as idea, the concept represents an unconditional totality, but it does not do so in the sense of an hypothetical "absolute" because the totality it represents is that of "appearances," i.e., the possible objects of a finite intuition. "World, as idea, is transcendent: it over-leaps appearances in such a way that it refers back to them precisely as their totality."<sup>41</sup>

When "world" is conceived in these terms, it then becomes apparent that "world belongs to a relationship (Beziehung) which characterizes the structure of Dasein as such and is termed

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39. p. 27.

40. p. 30.

41. p. 31.

being-in-the-world."<sup>42</sup> But now Heidegger wishes to determine this world phenomenon more "concretely," and he does so by taking up the notion of "totality" which so characterizes it.

As a totality, the world cannot be said to "be" anything ontic, but nevertheless is that "from which the Dasein derives meaning (sich zu bedeuten gibt) and to which beings can be meaningfully related." That is, in this encounter (auf-es-zukommen) with totality, "the Dasein temporalizes (zeitigt) itself as a self, i.e., as a being which is suggested (anheimgedenken) to be. In the Being of this being there is its own ability to be (geht es um dessen Seinkönnen)." That is, the Dasein "exists for the sake of existence (es umwillen seiner existiert)."<sup>43</sup>

When put in terms of "existence for its own sake," the Dasein is protected from the accusation that it is essentially "egotistical." On the contrary, it is "ontological" in the sense that it leaves undecided whether a particular Dasein is factually either egotistic or altruistic. This formula is ontically "neutral."<sup>44</sup>

The key term "umwillen" is descriptive of the fundamental behavior of the Dasein. It is reminiscent of the "attitude of openness towards..." which was pivotal in the "Kantbook," and represents the "projection" by the Dasein of all possibilities relative to itself and the other beings in the midst of which it finds itself (befindlich). As such, the umwillen is the

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42. p. 34.

43. p. 34.

44. p. 35.



totality of possibilities which, for its own sake as existence, the Dasein brings before itself, i.e., before the "self" which is found in this very projection.<sup>45</sup> Insofar, then as the "self" and the other beings are discovered only after the projection has been instituted, this "for-the-sake-of..." has no concrete object for the sake of which the projection is made - not even the "self." Hence, the "ontological" character of the unwillen, and the need to discern that the object of this "will-act" is not an ontical being as such, but the "world" as a "transcendental."

Since the unwillen exceeds all concrete possibilities, it is an Überwurf, an all-encompassing, all enclosing mantle which gathers up within it all possible concrete phenomena, both known and yet to be discovered. Much as an overcast sky blankets the earth and all it contains including its secrets, the unwillen exceeds the ontic to the extent that the unconditioned exceeds the conditioned.

The unwillen, then, is a world-projecting, world-constituting, world-founding, world-imaging act of the Dasein which makes possible the "historical" existence of both the objectified "self" and all the objectified beings within the world in the midst of which the self is found. The concrete world "happens," i.e., the ontic beings are given the opportunity (Gelegenheit) to "enter" the world (Welteingang) in consequence of this primordial, pre-ontic and therefore empty "for-the-sake-of..." will-act which amounts to an unconscious holding of oneself in

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45. p. 36.

opposition to....<sup>46</sup> As we shall see, the umwillen is the act of founding or grounding the world as it is ontically constituted (including the "self"). It is an act of freedom, i.e., transcendence, which makes all that is ontic possible both now, in the past, and in the future. In a word, the umwillen is a projection of the realm into which can enter all that can "be"; it is the Weltentwurf - the projection of an all-encompassing world. As the act of the transcendent Dasein, it constitutes the domain of transcendence itself, the domain which grounds or founds all that can possibly "be."<sup>47</sup>

### 3. The Essence of Ground

Discussion of the "principle of ground" led to the "problem of ground" and this latter to the realm of transcendence. It remains only to illuminate the essence of ground within this realm. "To what extent does the inner possibility for something like the essence of ground in general lie in transcendence?"<sup>48</sup> "Existence for its own sake," when manifest in Dasein, issues in care for the world, i.e., in care for the consequences of the umwillen. These consequences of the will-act, however, cannot in any way characterize the umwillen itself. Heidegger maintains that the umwillen has its roots in freedom: "The overleap to the world is freedom itself."<sup>49</sup> That is, freedom manifests itself in the umwillen of the transcendent Dasein. There, it holds itself in opposition to... (sichantgegenhalten) and thereby makes possible the ontical discoveries of the self and

<sup>46</sup>. p. 36f.

<sup>47</sup>. p. 38f.

<sup>48</sup>. p. 39.

<sup>49</sup>. p. 39.



the things in the world. Hence, "freedom alone is responsible for a world as such when it lets it come to be for the Dasein (Freiheit allein kann dem Dasein eine Welt walten und walten lassen)."<sup>50</sup> To dramatize this, Heidegger uses the noun "world" as a verb, and says, "The world never is except it is worlded (sondern weltet)," a quaint expression, but one which drives home the point that primordial freedom bears full responsibility for finite Dasein and "his" world. Only insofar as freedom makes the transcendent Dasein itself possible by manifesting itself as this primordial umwillen is it possible for the Dasein to find an historical self in the midst of an historical world.

Now, it is essential to put aside any notions of "spontaneity," and "first causes" when thinking of freedom. Freedom is indifferent to "beginnings" and "that which happens" (Geschehen).<sup>51</sup>

"The selfhood of the self cannot be grounded in spontaneity because this latter is itself already grounded. Rather, the selfhood of the self lies in transcendence. The projecting, over-casting, letting-come-to-be-as-it-pleases (entwerfend-überwerfende Waltenlassen) of the world is freedom. ... Freedom as transcendence is not just a particular 'kind' of ground; it is the origin of ground in general. Freedom is freedom to ground."<sup>52</sup>

Thus does Heidegger come to speak of the "primordial relation of freedom to ground." He calls this relation "grounding" (Gründen), and says that it is "strewn" in three ways: 1. as "instituting" (Stiften), where there is the sense of "giving," as by a "donor"; 2. as "gaining-ground" (Boden-nehmen), where there is the sense of "receiving"; and 3. as "establishing" (Begründen).

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50. p. 40.

51. p. 40.

52. p. 41.

in which there is the sense of "confirming" or "sealing."<sup>53</sup>

The first of these is "none other than the projection of possibilities in the unwillen." But this free act of letting the world come to be as it pleases for its own sake is an "open" stance in opposition to.... As such, it is incomplete. In freedom, there is, however, both a giving and taking.<sup>54</sup> The attitude of open receptivity is neither open to..., nor "receptive" until something is "there" to be received. Therefore, the balancing counter-part of this first mode of grounding is the second, or "gaining-ground." Heidegger maintains that the initial act of projecting is always excessive (Überschwingt);<sup>55</sup> it is open to all possibilities. But only some of them can be realized. Hence, there is a withdrawal (Entzug) of some.<sup>56</sup> With this withdrawal - and only then - the "self" and the other beings can become manifest as the beings they "are" - or "appear" to be.

Although it would seem that these two modes of founding are sufficient to ground ontic knowledge, they constitute only the "possibility" of grounding, and therefore the possibility of ontic truth. As a unified, single action of mutual reciprocity, these are "enabled" by another "relation," namely, "establishing."<sup>57</sup>

Heidegger explains this third relation by means of the question Why? The first relation, "instituting," has the ontical significance of Was-sein (essence). When Why? interrogates from

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53. p. 41.  
57. p. 44.

54. p. 41.

55. p. 43.

56. p. 43.



the orientation of this first mode, there is presupposed the "ontological difference." In consequence, a question something like this evolves: Why this essence and not another?<sup>58</sup> The second mode, "gaining-ground," when asking Why? (because it represents Dass-sein or Wie-sein, i.e., existence) yields this question: Why this existence and not another?<sup>59</sup> Again the ontological difference is presupposed.

Both of these fundamental questions presuppose ontic truth, i.e., the presence of already existing beings as fully manifest and fully known. As the difference between Being and beings, the ontological difference is the most original, however, in the ultimate "Why?" which Heidegger formulates as "Why in general is there something instead of nothing at all?"<sup>60</sup> Only when the answer to this latter question has already been given in the form of "primal first to last answers to all questions" of an ontic nature can one possibly raise any ontic question at all. That is, the raising of an ontic question assumes that it can be answered sooner or later. Furthermore, no ultimate barriers are anticipated in this quest. All questions "from first to last" are fair game. But all such questions, says Heidegger, assume to know already the answer to the ultimate Why?. For this reason, the third relation in grounding, rooted in the ontological difference as the answer to the ultimate question Why? empowers or enables the other two, and therefore stands as their ultimate basis.<sup>61</sup> Yet, it cannot be said to be prior to them in the sense that they are unessential. "Establishing"

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58. p. 45.

59. p. 45.

60. p. 45.

61. p. 46.

is truly establishing only when it has something to establish, e.g., the ontical beings which constitute the world. Therefore, these three modes of grounding are all required simultaneously, as it were, before the unwillen's projection of the world can receive any form whatsoever.<sup>62</sup> Ontic truth presupposes ontological truth, and vice versa; and these two truths are given in transcendence which is freedom. Together they constitute the poles of the fundamental relation which is termed the ontological difference. And the knowledge of this difference constitutes ontological truth, or the truth of Being.<sup>63</sup> Hence, the necessary "proof" that grounds ontic truth.

Thus do we see that when anything is "grounded," it is: 1. projected in terms of possibility; 2. reduced to reality (Boden); and 3. proven;<sup>64</sup> all three modes together constituting the occurrence (Geschehen) of transcendence: the threefold way freedom brings to ground all that is. Yet, it must be remembered that these three modes of "strewn" grounds are but the several aspects of one relation, namely, that of freedom to ground. There is but one grounding process, so to speak; it comes to expression in the Dasein's Being as "care" (Sorge): care for durability (Beständigkeit) and stability (Bestandes). Yet, care is only possible as temporality.<sup>65</sup>

Now, here we find the second<sup>66</sup> mention of an "intentional withdrawal from the realm of the problem of temporality."<sup>67</sup> But

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62. p. 45f.

63. p. 45.

64. p. 46.

65. p. 47.

66. In a fn. on p. 42, Heidegger says that the "temporal interpretation of transcendence" is purposely avoided in this essay.

67. p. 47.



this time there is the promise of an explanation in terms of what has been won in this analysis for the "problem of the 'principle of ground.'"<sup>68</sup> The principle asserts that every being has its ground. But it is precisely...

"...because Being 'natively' (von Hause aus) and originally grounds as the understanding of priority (als vorgängig verstandenes) that every being in its own way announces 'ground' and thereby makes possible its being measured and constituted as such. That is, because 'ground' is a transcendental essence of Being in general, the principle of ground holds for beings. But because there is only Being (not beings) in transcendence (when cast in terms of world-projecting, self-disclosing grounding), ground belongs to the essence of Being."<sup>69</sup>

Thus we see that the "origin" (Geburtsort) of this principle lies neither in the essence of propositions, nor in that of propositional truth, but in ontological truth, i.e., in transcendence itself. "Freedom is the origin of the principle of ground."<sup>70</sup>

Now, every attempt to "prove" something "must move in a circle of possibility" because it is "an intentional relation to beings" and therefore already subject to a grounding process of some sort, whether ontic or ontological.<sup>71</sup> If it moves in this circle, then there is always a "realm of open possibility" (Ausschlagbereiche von Möglichen) which finds expression in the argument in such terms as "prior to," or "on the basis of," etc.. Hence, there is a movement in the direction of an ultimate priority: the idea of Being in general. Even the traditionally grounding principles of "identity" and "contradiction" are necessarily rooted in a primordiality more basic than "propositional character," namely, "the event of transcendence as such,"

68. p. 47.

69. p. 47.

70. p. 48.

71. p. 48.

which is "temporality."<sup>72</sup> This is to say that "priority" is the basis of "logical" proof, and that "priority" as such is temporal. That which transcends beings, then, is temporality, i.e., Being, Nothing, Nothingness.<sup>73</sup>

The principle of ground, if truly "basic," is rooted in temporality and must ultimately expose its own dis-essence (Unwesen) in temporality, i.e., in that which is "prior" to the beings which are brought to ground by the principle. Heidegger contends that "ground has its dis-essence because it arises in freedom,"<sup>74</sup> and we assume that freedom, then, is also to be identified in some way with temporality. And so it is.

"Freedom as the unity of the transcendental strewing of grounds is the non-ground (Ab-grund) of Dasein."<sup>75</sup> It sets the Dasein squarely in the midst of possibilities which open up to its finite choice, and enables it to have such a thing as "destiny." Destiny has its "destination" in the "distance," that is, in the future. But this future must not be of the sort that ever actually, i.e., historically, becomes realized. "Progress" and "history" are indications of the fact that the Dasein is destined, but its destination cannot be achieved in history, i.e., "in time," else it is no longer transcendent, i.e., free, future. "The dis-essence of ground thus becomes in factical existence 'progress' (überwunden), but is never done away with."<sup>76</sup>

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72. p. 49.  
76. p. 50.

73. p. 48.

74. p. 49.

75. p. 49.



"And thus is man as existing transcendence over-extended (überschwindend) in possibilities, an essence of distance (Ferne),"<sup>77</sup> an instance of the future which never temporalizes itself "as such" and becomes "history." We see here at the end, then, what became so very evident in the "Kantbook," that time is the criterion which ultimately enables objectification to have the assurance of truth. But this essay, despite its express intention to avoid a "temporal interpretation" of transcendence, makes even more explicit the priority of this "temporal" criterion.

#### 4. Comment

We shied away from much discussion at the close of our lengthy study of Heidegger's interpretation of Kant's Critique until such time as we would have more reason to comment. Now we believe the time has come.

One of the first things that occurs to us is the striking parallel between the three modes of grounding and the three modes of temporalizing in the "Kantbook." "Apprehension" of the now in the temporalization of the "present" corresponds in this essay, does it not?, to the first mode of grounding, namely, "instituting." And this first mode enjoys a "mutual reciprocity" with its ontic correlate, "gaining-ground," which seems to us, in its "withdrawal," to be analogous to "reproduction's" "recollection." But the most incisive parallel appears between

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<sup>77</sup>. p. 50.

these two inter-related, mutually dependent, and simultaneous actions and the third which in each case is more basic than the other two - though necessarily simultaneous - in that it "enables" or "empowers" the others. And in each case, this third mode is "future."

We are not intent upon "establishing," i.e., "proving," that this suggested correlation is in fact justified. We simply observe that there appears to be a parallel, and comment that one ought to appear if the conclusions of each work are worthy of their intent. For, each attempts to "lay" the "foundation" or "ground" which is without prior. That each ends in positing the future to be that which is without prior is therefore to be expected.

Yet, we find in this essay a development which did not appear in the "kantbook." We sense a decided difference between the ontic Dasein and its ontological counter-part.<sup>78</sup> The ontic, finite, and therefore "mortal" Dasein may or may not exist "as such." Whereas, the transcendent Dasein is always existing if it is transcendent, i.e., free, future. When, then, Heidegger says that "transcendence is the fundamental disposition of human Dasein,"<sup>79</sup> that the over-leap always happens in wholeness (which immediately calls to mind "the horizon of all possible unity") and not just occasionally, but all of the time,<sup>80</sup> that Dasein is transcendence to the extent that freedom manifests itself in the unwillen, which action is prior to the ontical "self" which

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78. See above, p. 136, fn. 23.

79. p. 17.

80. p. 19.



is thereby discovered,<sup>81</sup> and finally, that Dasein is "an essence of distance,"<sup>82</sup> i.e., future time - when he says these things, then, surely he is positing something like "life" in general, or, that condition which always characterizes the "existing" Dasein. If this is so, then his later formulations, Da-sein and ex-sistence, constitute a graphic exposition of the relation between the ontic and ontological (the ontological difference), a relation which is rooted in a temporal dialectic which "occurs" in existing Dasein as the tension between history, say, and the always-future, a tension which continually "vibrates"<sup>83</sup> so that "moods" are the fundamental characteristic of existence, their basic "state" being "care."<sup>84</sup>

When, then, Being as the essential or ontical expression of time (as past, present, and future) is disclosed to have its "dis-essence" in Nothing, we have again a temporal tension. But this time it is between time and eternity, where this latter is defined as the ever-future Future. For, it is this "always-future" which alone always abides as the Nothing from which all that comes to be comes into Being, yet does not constitute Being, because this concept itself is the one-word formula for the ontological difference in that it reflects both essence and dis-essence. Because of this dialectical character, Being can never be said to be "as such," yet is the "ground" of all that "is."

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81. p. 35f.                      82. p. 50.

83. A term Heidegger uses when analysing the "key mood" of dread. See below, Chapter V.

84. In addition to Chapter V below, see Being and Time. pp. 34-7.

If such thought is consistent with what Heidegger is saying, and we maintain that it is, then it is time that is the critical criterion which enables differentiation of every sort. That is, it is the "intuition" of time; it is the coming of time to man and in man that "enables" him to "be" what he "is." Time, then, is the "wholly other" that remains "other" while at the same time coming to meet man where he is, and uniting with him in the vital relation which yields knowledge of its existence as both "other" and "here and now."

Theologians have (as poets, to Heidegger's mind) tried to "name" the "holy," but have always ended in ascribing to God, "essence" and "existence," and have attested to His "action" in "history." That is, they have, as Heidegger has, been forced, as it were, to confine their "naming" to a "being" who is "the" being (much as Being is to beings). But over against all "essence," there is always the "difference" which grounds it, namely, - and for lack of a better term - "dis-essence" (or, what is fundamentally "other" than "essence").

Dasein's temporality is temporary. Yet, he senses a temporality which is eternal. But because that which is always future to every generation of men, including the first, is what is common to every generation, this dimension of "phenomenal" time has become that upon which all else is based. The ever-future is transcendent and transcendence itself. But its relation to the ontical future - which does come - is as primordial source, i.e., ground or basis. They are one, yet with -



difference, say, as the Father or God-head is said to differ from the Son. To be sure, if the Son had not come, we would have no knowledge of the Father - hence, Christocentric theology. And only because the Son came, do we have history, destiny, etc.. The tension, then, is between two futures. The Holy Spirit, given to all men by grace, makes them "sons" too, and enables "fellowship" with Christ who abides in the bosom of the Father. All men, too, are the scene, so to speak, of the "incarnation" (by grace and/or adoption) and anticipate the "resurrection" which marks the return of the "visitor" from eternity to eternity.

The past, then, as a dimension of time, is robbed of primacy because it is the burial ground, so to speak, of "present" time, which latter is the meeting of the ever-future with the ontic future now come. So long as this meeting endures, "life" endures. The problem is death, i.e., history. If for one moment history becomes the focus of worth-ship, i.e., the ultimate value, then the meeting, i.e., the "incarnation," is "crucified." But such an "end" does not bring to end the meeting because of the unity that pervades futurity. This "present" future is one with the ever-future despite the difference. Hence, the former's "return." Faith consists of this first "tension": the one between futures. Doubt, on the other hand, is the tension between the ontic future and the past, and is characterized by the granting of ultimate worth (worship) to history. It consists in failing to "see" that it is futurity and not history

that is prior, i.e., of ultimate worth, in "life." If faith is maintained to the last, even should the last moment be on a cross, then history is never the victor, whatever historians may say to the contrary.

The "stumbling block" to faith is that history must be accorded value as the testimony, as it were, the testament, which bears witness to the "meeting." For, without confronting the past (as history), a man cannot know what is "other" to it. The past, then, is the focus of man's attention as "historian" in order that he may bring it to end, and thereby assign it its proper place as ultimately "different" from, or "other" than, that which has prior value. Man "writes history, and therefore is "on top" of it, so to speak; whereas, he is at the mercy of the future. As "historian," he enjoys a view of the past which is always "eschatological" to it, at its "end." This orientation is what enables him to be an historian, and to fix the past "once and for all" - almost out of desperation because he can never "fix" the future.

Hence, man is pre-occupied with history, but only that he may find there what is not history, i.e., himself and his God. i.e., the meeting of the future-now-come with the ever-future. Dasein, as Heidegger rightly sees, is Dasein only when he is the essence of distance, i.e., destined.

The criterion, then, for the assessment of history is afforded man in "life" when this latter is seen to be the "meeting place" (Sein) of the future with the ever-future (Sein and



Nichts). These latter because they are "one" - yet with a difference - constitute the tension or ambiguity in Sein which becomes apparent only when one analyses the history of thought from the perspective of the a priori which is always future. By this fixed standard, all movement is assessed as "movement," and accordingly reduced to its subordinate relation as "history." When Heidegger claims to have brought to end the history of metaphysics, he claims no more than "Church historians" have always claimed, namely, to see "whole." It is an error to say that Christ stands at the center of history; he stands, rather, at the end of all that "has been" as its judge, this "end" being not the end of time (as in eschatology and apocalypse) but that point in time which, because of its identity with the ever-future, is nevertheless different and "be-comes," having rather the sense of an "eternal now." This ever-moving point in time will always be the "judge" of history. But is it the right to "judge" that is at stake, or the ability to forever remain at that "point" in time which pin-points existence? We maintain that it is the latter, and that time in its future ecstasy is "what" all the "religious" furor is about.

This sojourn into speculation arises, as we said, after having examined only three of Heidegger's works (if we can count his Introduction to Being and Time). Much that we have said both here and in our Introduction will persist as speculation until we have documented it, and this can be done only by continuing our examination of other works. We proceed, then, to "What is Metaphysics?" and Heidegger's explication of the essence of Being.

## Chapter V

"What is Metaphysics?"<sup>1</sup>

## 1. Introductory

This rather famous lecture was given on the occasion of Heidegger's accession in 1929 to the chair of philosophy at the University of Freiburg, a post left vacant when his teacher, Edmund Husserl, retired. Because it is a lecture, it is a short piece. Its length was increased, however, some thirteen years later by a Postscript which reflects some of the criticism which must have been leveled at it. Even then, like many of Heidegger's works, it is a short and extremely compact utterance, so crystallized that it might be said to represent only the inter-related conclusions which have arisen from an extensive and intensive study over many years. Speaking generally of the four essays which he is introducing, one of which is this lecture, Werner Brock says:

"The treatment is not analytic and demonstrative, but condensed to the utmost and, though strictly conceptual, largely in the way of brief characterizing statements. We may be sure that the thought behind any formula ventured is as acute and penetrating as in the earlier main work. But the treatment takes this for granted and implicitly expects the same amount of analytic grasp from the reader as was implied in the preparation of the extremely concentrated exposition."<sup>2</sup>

No doubt Brock's warning should be heeded.

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1. This essay is one of four published in English translation with a lengthy introduction by Werner Brock under the title Existence and Being, Henry Regnery Company, Chicago, 1949. Ours has been the paperback Gateway Edition, 1960, and is hereafter referred to in this chapter only by page number.
  2. p. 118.



In this lecture, Heidegger chooses to approach his subject indirectly. Rather than take up metaphysics as a whole at the start, he intends to "discuss a definite metaphysical question" which will lead into metaphysics. Once the question posed is developed, then we will find ourselves in the midst of metaphysics, and may then move toward answering the title question. For, as he says, "every metaphysical question always covers the whole range of metaphysical problems" if it is truly "metaphysical." And because it is a question put by man, it must always be "based on the essential situation of existence," i.e., man's existence.<sup>4</sup>

Beginning thus, Heidegger addresses primarily the physical scientists and all that "scientism" represents, i.e., that orientation towards "things" which is expressed in measuring and calculating their Was-sein and Wie-sein. "What the sciences accomplish, ideally speaking, is an approximation to the essential nature of all things."<sup>5</sup> That is, they establish the inter-relations of all "things" in the world, i.e., a "world-relation." But they do this in virtue of a "freely chosen attitude which is characterized as "allowing the object itself the first and last word." This attitude of submission to the object itself, however, has practical implications, namely, that science thereby enjoys the possibility of "acquiring a leadership of its own, albeit limited, in the whole field of human existence."<sup>6</sup> Heidegger explains this in terms of the

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3. p. 325.

4. p. 325.

5. p. 326.

6. p. 327.

"irruption of man" into the world in such a way that the beings which constitute it emerge "as" and "how" they are. That is, the "way" in which this revelation occurs has everything to do with the final decision as to "what" and "how" beings "are." Man is the interrogator of beings and therefore the "measure" of all "things."

These three: "world-relation," "attitude," and "irruption" share something in common in virtue of their relation to "beings." The "world-relation" refers to "beings" - and to nothing else; science effects its "irruption" by means of "beings" - and nothing else; and every "attitude" is "molded" by "beings" - and nothing else. In a word, there is an implicit relation established with the opposite of beings when "beings - and nothing else" are interrogated. Yet, science has absolutely no interest in this "nothing else."<sup>7</sup> It "wishes to know nothing of Nothing,"<sup>8</sup> even though it has recourse to this Nothing at every turn as that which implicitly collaborates in the definition of beings: they are thus and so, and not otherwise. Why this "schizophrenic" attitude? "What about Nothing?"<sup>9</sup>

## 2. The Question of Nothing

Thus is the question put. And to be sure, it fulfills the requirements specified by Heidegger at the outset. It interrogates the whole range of metaphysical problems and does so from the point of view of existence.

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7. p. 327f.

8. p. 328f.

9. p. 329.



First to be seen is that the Nothing, though we speak of "it" as if it were "something," is not an entity, a being.<sup>10</sup> Is this enquiry therefore already at an end? Only if traditional "logic" reigns as the supreme criterion for judgment. But we have already seen that the power of "logic" dwells in its inexorable "order," an order which "ascends" to the unconditional.<sup>11</sup> As such, it is rooted in the a priori, i.e., in the always-future. Only by rejecting "logic" as the highest court of appeal is it possible to pursue the Nothing and so discover why "logic" has prevailed relative to ontic truth. For, it is grounded in the Nothing. "'Nothing' is more original than the Not and negation" of logical, rational enquiry.<sup>12</sup> We therefore surpass "logic" and speak quite freely of the Nothing as though it were "something," all the while aware that it is not.<sup>13</sup>

"If Nothing is still to be enquired into, it follows that it must be 'given' in advance.<sup>14</sup> We must be able to encounter

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10: p. 329. 11. See above, pp. 139, 148. 12. p. 331.

13. For those who fail to equate the Nothing with the ever-future, little sense can be made of this attempt to say something about Nothing. Though "ontically" nothing, the Nothing is nevertheless "something" which grounds everything as their prior. Put in theological terms, the Nothing is the "absence" of God, His transcendence, His eternity, His ever-future pre-eminence. Heidegger is attempting in the realm of metaphysics to expose once and for all the abiding criterion which has governed all logical thought from the beginning, a criterion which has all the while "shown itself" without ever becoming "ontical." Futurity "shows itself" in the Dasein who is the essence of "distance." During existence, we are aware of that which never comes, namely, "tomorrow." It is this simple presence of the ever-future that wholly dominates every effort to think "logically," and provides the standard by which all that does become "ontic" is measured. If this "interpretation" of the Nothing is granted, then it springs to life, all illogic falling away. And something of a parallel is seen between the problem of "objectifying" the Nothing and that of "objectifying" God.

14. This formula we note as being characteristic of both Kant and Heidegger's analytical approach.

it."<sup>15</sup> But where shall it be sought? In everyday, off-hand language, the Nothing is bandied about carelessly. In such do we find our preliminary definition. In everyday language, "Nothing is the complete negation of the totality of beings."<sup>16</sup> As a "definition," it is also a guide, for it indicates "the direction from which alone it may meet us."

"The totality of beings must be given before hand so as to succumb as such to the negation from which Nothing is then found to emerge."<sup>17</sup>

Now, "the totality of beings," i.e., the "world," as we have seen, is not something which we can know as such. "World" is a transcendental. It follows, then, that if "world" is transcendental, that which negates it will also be transcendental. But this explanation is only hinted. Heidegger's exposition of the Nothing utilizes a brief phenomenological analysis of "mood." Boredom and joy, for example, reveal the totality of beings as we relate to it. In boredom, the mood, i.e., relation, is one of "indifference." Joy is quite the opposite. Moods, as the "ground-phenomenon of our Dasein" not only reveal the totality of beings as "world," but they seem also to "hide the Nothing we are seeking."<sup>18</sup>

Yet there is one mood, "the key mood of dread" (Angst), which is revelatory of the Nothing.<sup>19</sup> In contrast to fear, dread has no object. When we are afraid, we are always afraid of..., i.e., afraid of something. With dread, on the other hand,

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15. p. 332.

16. p. 334.

16. p. 332.

19. p. 335.

17. p. 332.



there is a definite indefiniteness of "what" the dread is about.<sup>20</sup> There is something "sinister" (unheimlich) or uncanny about it in the sense that the world somehow begins to withdraw from us into unreality, but in so doing actually presses in upon us with sinister force. But...

"...there is nothing to hold on to. The only thing that remains and overwhelms us whilst beings slip away is this 'nothing.' Dread reveals Nothing."<sup>21</sup>

So overwhelming is this mood that we are struck dumb. That is, when everything shrinks from us, so also departs the objects of all speech. If we speak at all while in the grips of dread, we break the awful silence "by words spoken at random" as though to break its spell with sound - just any sound at all. And when confronted afterwards with What was wrong?, we answer. Nothing! "And indeed Nothing itself. Nothing as such, was there."<sup>22</sup>

If so, then what about Nothing?

In an endeavor to answer this question, Heidegger insists that we understand that this key mood of dread happens "in our Da-sein." That is, we have to relinquish "man" and realize that it is to the "transcending" "Da-sein" that Nothing is revealed.<sup>23</sup> This all-important requirement means that henceforth it is not the "ontic" objectifiable "self" that is under discussion here, but Da-sein, ex-sistence.

If this is understood, then we can proceed to note that that which is revealed as Nothing is not something over against

20. p. 335.

21. p. 336.

22. p. 337.

23. p. 337.

the totality of beings, but rather is "at one with it."<sup>24</sup> As everything recedes into unreality, the objectified "self" goes right along with everything else towards oblivion, i.e., nothing. But, the Nothing "does not attract: its nature is to repel."<sup>25</sup> Thus, it reveals itself to be "nihilation" (Nichtung) in the sense that everything that is, including the "self," is neither annihilated nor negated, but simply revealed in all its previously undisclosed "strangeness as the pure 'Other.'"<sup>26</sup> Everything that is, stands in contrast to the Nothing which, in the moment of dread, abides, as it were, in the transcendent Da-sein.

The thought here is difficult. There is no contradiction in what we have said. The problem is one of distinguishing between "the totality of beings" which is a transcendental, and "everything that is." This latter is intended "ontically" and the former "ontologically," so that the Nothing is "at one" with "totality" and the Da-sein in contrast with everything that "is" including the objectified self. "In the clear night of dread's Nothingness," everything is revealed in all its original "frankness" as "there" in utter and sharp distinction to the Nothing.<sup>27</sup> Here is the "difference" that is grounded in priority, the "strangeness" of the Da to the Sein, the connection between immanence and transcendence. Futurity is forever strange to and estranged from what is so "frank" and "open." "Only on the basis of the original manifestness of Nothing can our human Da-sein

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24. p. 337.

25. p. 338.

26. p. 339.

27. p. 339.



advance towards and enter into being"<sup>28</sup> (in the ontical sense).

"Da-sein," then, means "being held into the Nothing" (Hineinhaltenheit in das Nichts).<sup>29</sup> When held into the Nothing, the Da-sein is "other" than the beings which "are"; it is transcendent.<sup>30</sup> Were this not so, the Da-sein could never move towards... as in the primal unwillen, and finally connect, or relate, with "objects," and thereby dis-cover self-relation.<sup>31</sup> So, except the Nothing be manifest prior to the revelation of beings as "there," there can be no ontic beings at all.

Thus, we find the answer to the question: What about Nothing? It is "neither an object nor anything that 'is' at all." And it "occurs neither by itself nor 'apart from' what-is as a sort of adjunct."<sup>32</sup>

"Nothing is that which makes the revelation of beings as such possible for our human existence. Nothing not merely provides the conceptual opposite to beings but is also an original part of essence. It is in the Being of beings that the nihilation by Nothing (das Nichten des Nichts) occurs."<sup>33</sup>

If this is the case, then why is it that "dread," as the mood which reveals the Nothing, is feared and, in consequence, so rarely experienced? It would seem from what has been said that we would have to be in a continual state of dread in order to "relate" to things. But this does not appear to be the case. Heidegger suggests that our preoccupation with things is of such intensity that our relation to the Nothing is wholly distorted from its original state. We ourselves end up as "things." Yet, Nothing nihilates unceasingly, even without our knowledge.<sup>34</sup>

28. p. 339.

29. p. 340.

29. p. 339.

33. p. 340.

30. p. 339.

34. p. 340f.

31. p. 340.

Evidence for this is afforded in the way we ourselves negate. As a basic constituent of language, the "Not" is not self-producing. It can negate only when there is something "there" to negate. "But how can a thing that is or ought to be negated be seen as such unless all thinking as such is on the look-out for the Not?"<sup>35</sup> The priority of the constant nihilation by the Nothing is thus to be seen as making possible this negating relation to the things at hand. "Nothing is the source of negation, not the other way around."<sup>36</sup>

In addition to linguistic negation, the "harshness of opposition and the violence of loathing, ... the pain of refusal and the mercilessness of an interdict," not to mention the oppressive bitterness of renunciation - these cruel realities of human behavior poignantly indicate the continuous parentage of the nihilation of Nothing, concealed though it be.<sup>37</sup>

"Dread is there, but sleeping. All Da-sein quivers with its breathing: the pulsation is slightest in beings that are timorous, and is imperceptible in the 'Yee, yee!' and 'Nay, No!'" of busy people; it is readiest in the reserved, and surest of all in the courageous."<sup>38</sup>

Because our Da-sein is held into Nothing on the basis of hidden dread, "man becomes the 'stand-in' (Platzhalter) for Nothing."<sup>39</sup> But as a finite "stand-in," he is so inexorably tied up with beings and things that he resists with all his might coming face to face with Nothing. He resists at every turn finalization (Verendlichung) of anything - including himself - and consequently knows little of the majesty of freedom.

<sup>35</sup> p. 341.  
<sup>39</sup> p. 343.

<sup>36</sup> p. 342.

<sup>37</sup> p. 342f.

<sup>38</sup> p. 343.



i.e., the heights of "profoundest finality."<sup>40</sup> We take this to mean that only as the Da-sein is held into the Nothing does it abide, as it were, within the "horizon of all possible unity," and taste of that exquisite Unity which alone makes the Da really "there" "as such," instead of an itinerant transient - always merely relative and on the move towards such unity. Being held into the Nothing, i.e., transcendence, enables "the overcoming" of beings "as such"; it establishes them in Being; it constitutes them.<sup>41</sup> When such occurs, we have an "event," a datum of real history, a sign of progress.

Thus do we arrive at metaphysics: going beyond, "overcoming" (para) physics (physis). From ancient times onwards, "metaphysics has expressed itself on the subject of Nothing in the highly ambiguous proposition: ex nihilo nihil fit - nothing comes from nothing." Though not discussing Nothing explicitly, it nevertheless makes implicit that to which the totality of being is opposed.<sup>42</sup>

In classical metaphysics, Nothing denotes Non-being, i.e., "unformed matter which is powerless to form itself into a being and cannot therefore present an appearance (eidōs)."<sup>43</sup> That which is a being presents itself in an image as something seen. But, "the origin, law and limits of this ontological concept are discussed as little as Nothing itself."<sup>43</sup>

In Christian doctrine, the proposition ex nihilo nihil fit becomes ex nihilo fit - ens creatum, which means that no being

40. p. 344.

41. 344.

42. p. 344f.

43. p. 344.

exist except that God created them from nothing. Thus God becomes the summu ens, the ens increatum. All of the things that "are" stand in contrast and opposition to God. Yet, in traditional Christian doctrine, neither Being nor Nothing is sought in a sufficiently primordial way even though God is said to be the summu ens. Accordingly, God has no knowledge of the Nothing; all "nullity" is "logically" excluded from the "Absolute."<sup>44</sup>

In this brief allusion to the history of thought, Heidegger shows how Nothing is the "conceptual opposite of what truly and authentically 'is,' i.e., as the negation of it."<sup>45</sup> Once the Nothing is raised to the level of a problem, however, and its solution is sought regardless of what it may cost in terms of traditional norms, e.g., "logic," "this contrast not only undergoes clearer definition but also arouses the true and authentic metaphysical question regarding the Being of beings.

"Nothing ceases to be the vague opposite of beings; it now reveals itself as integral to the Being of beings. ... Being and Nothing hang together, but not because the two - from the point of view of Hegelian thought<sup>46</sup> - are one in their indefiniteness and immediateness, but because Being itself is finite in essence and is revealed only in the transcendence of Da-sein as held into Nothing."<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>. p. 345.      <sup>45</sup>. p. 346.

<sup>46</sup>. "Pure Being and pure Nothing are thus one and the same," Hegel in "The Science of Logic," I, WW 111, p. 74 - as quoted by Heidegger, p. 346.

<sup>47</sup>. p. 346. We call attention to this statement of the "finitude of Being" and its "integral" relation to the Nothing as documentation for the "speculation" above (pp. 149-55, esp. pp. 151 and 155). Plainly we have here within the unity of the concept "Being" a dialectic between "essence" and "dis-essence," its unity being that both of identity and difference. Our temporal interpretation of this ontological construct posits "identity" in that futurity which is common both to the ever-future as well to that which becomes "historical" time, this latter distinction constituting their "difference." For a full discussion of the identity and difference of this "integral" relation, see below, chapter VII.



With this we see how the Nothing, because of its relation to Being, embraces the whole of metaphysics in such a way that the "origin of negation" is disclosed at the expense of the rule of "logic."<sup>48</sup> The Ancient proposition ex nihilo nihil fit, therefore acquires a new meaning: one that more appropriately relates to the problem of Being and Nothing. It now reads: ex nihilo omnia ens qua ens fit: all beings qua beings come from nothing.<sup>49</sup> That is, to the extent that beings are recognized to derive their objective existence from the prior action of transcendent Da-sein, i.e., from freedom, they are "there" "as such" (qua "beings"). The transcendence of Being as revealed in finite Da-sein grounds beings in Being and delivers them, as it were, from the abyss of Nothing to the solid ground of "historical" existence. The nothingness of Da-sein, then, is the realm from which the totality of beings, as "totality," comes to Being qua beings, i.e., "there."<sup>50</sup>

Now, since "scientific" Da-sein relates to beings and to them alone, it also relates to Nothing, albeit unconsciously. Hence, "science proceeds from metaphysics," and only as doing so can it accomplish its essential task: "the perpetual discovery of the whole realm of truth, whether of Nature or of History."<sup>51</sup>

"Only because Nothing is revealed in the very ground of our Da-sein is it possible for the utter strangeness of beings to dawn upon us. Only when the strangeness of beings forces itself upon us does it awaken and invite wonder. Only because of wonder, that is to say, the revelation of Nothing does the 'why?' spring to our lips. Only because this 'Why?' is possible as such can we seek for reasons and proofs in "

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48. p. 346.

49. p. 346f.

50. p. 347.

51. p. 347.

definite way. Only because we can ask and prove are we fated to become enquirers in this life.

The enquiry into Nothing puts us, the enquirers, ourselves in question. It is a metaphysical one."<sup>52</sup>

Going beyond physics, i.e., the sum of the things that "are," is meta-physics. It is also, as an activity of the Da-sein, transcendence. Hence, "metaphysics is the ground-phenomenon of Da-sein. It is Da-sein itself." Therefore, it is not to be measured in terms of the "idea of science"; it enjoys a priority all its own; hence, an authority unequalled. "So long as man exists there will be philosophizing of some sort"<sup>53</sup>: the kind of questioning which asks "Why is there any Being at all - why not far rather Nothing?"<sup>54</sup>

### 3. "Postscript"

With this now familiar question, Heidegger concludes his lecture. Appended to it some thirteen years later, a Postscript seeks to set the record straight relative to three basic criticisms. But beyond defending the main theses of the lecture, it brings to bear the insight of another thirteen years: insight which shows no radical change in the original themes, but changes nevertheless which we characterize as a softening of the lines of the sketch, a gentler rendering which occasionally breaks over into "religious" metaphors.

Heidegger's title question, "What is metaphysics?," seeks to go beyond metaphysics, to encompass it as from an Archimedean

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<sup>52</sup>. p. 348.

<sup>53</sup>. A quote by Heidegger from Plato: Phaedrus, 279a; p. 349.

<sup>54</sup>. p. 349.



point outside its sphere. As such the lecture seeks to surpass itself by being that kind of thought which is so oriented that the passage of time and the changes that inevitably occur in history will not "date" it, or render it obsolete. Thinking of the sort that this lecture represents, namely, thinking Being both in its essence and dis-essence, brings to end the whole history of metaphysics, and gives it a radically altered course.<sup>55</sup> Despite its popularity and the great faith placed in it, science cannot serve as the starting point of an attempt to surpass metaphysics because it has failed to honor its original purpose: to seek the truth. Its mode of objectification is such that beings are so safeguarded as a means of further advance, that objectification "gets stuck in beings and regards them as nothing less than Being" itself.<sup>56</sup>

The history of science bears witness to its inability "by and of itself" to prove the truth of the knowledge of Being. Indeed, it doesn't even try. The history of metaphysics (ontology), on the other hand, "thinks the thought of Being" by conceptualizing the Being of beings. It moves in the realm of the truth of Being "which truth remains the unknown and unfathomable ground."<sup>57</sup>

"But supposing that not merely beings come from Being, but that, in a manner still more original, Being itself reposes in its truth and that the truth of Being is a function of the Being of Truth,<sup>58</sup> then we must necessarily ask what

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55. p. 349f.

56. p. 350.

57. p. 351.

58. Here is quite obviously a reference to the "reversal" required for the missing third section of the "First Half" of Being and Time, a reversal in which the "essence of truth" is seen. It is also the "truth of essence," a reversal in which "Being and Time" becomes "Time and Being." See above, p. 52f. and below, Chapter VI.

metaphysics is in its own ground. Such a question must think metaphysically and, at the same time, think in terms of the ground of metaphysics, i.e., no longer metaphysically. All such questions must remain equivocal in an essential sense."<sup>59</sup>

If it is difficult to follow the thought of the lecture, it is because "enigmas lurk in this region of thought" which all too often are insufficiently reflected upon to yield clarity.<sup>60</sup> The three main criticisms of the lecture reflect this. They are: 1. It sounds like Nihilism: a philosophy of Nothing; 2. It paralyses the will to act: a philosophy of Dread; 3. It is anti-"logical": a philosophy of pure feeling.

This philosophy is not, however, a simple matter of either/or: either beings as science treats them, i.e., as already equivalent to Being, or, the rejection of all beings in an affirmation of Nothing, as in Nihilism. Rather, Heidegger asserts, we must learn...

"...to experience in Nothing the vastness of that which gives every being the warrant to be. That is Being itself. Without Being, whose unfathomable and unmanifest essence is

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59. p. 351. Here is the most concise statement we have found so far of the essential genius of Heidegger's approach: it is essentially equivocal. "Even the most genuine question is never stilled by the answer found" (p. 351f.). Always each answer helps only to pose the next question. On and on goes the quest in utilization of the moments of time as they are given, each succeeded by another, each new one rolling inexorably from an eternal source and bearing the distinct marks of primordiality. We see the primacy of futurity to be one "voice" in this "equivocal" orientation. It is the "unknown and unfathomable ground," the Being which is also Nothing. The other voice is that of beings; together, these voices meet in the human Da-sein in an essential ambiguity of tensions: one between beings and Being, and the other between Being and Nothing. Thus, Being stands in the middle, as Da-sein-lichts, torn between the two extremes and seeking a possible way. Questioning historical Da-sein who surpasses history, and by bringing it to end is no longer threatened by its "problem."

60. p. 352.



vouchsafed us by Nothing in essential dread, everything that 'is' would remain in Beinglessness. But this too, in its turn, is not a nugatory Nothing, assuming that it is of the truth of Being that Being may be without beings,<sup>61</sup> but never beings without Being."<sup>62</sup>

The "soundless voice" of Being speaks in essential dread, and a mood is struck in which we are "attuned" both to the primordiality and consequent stability of Being, and to the transient instability of ontic beings. In dread we are suspended, as it were, in virtue of this "equivocal" orientation, over an abyss. In dread it is neither one nor the other, but both a vaporous eternal stability in the oblivion of Being, and the concrete presence of beings as "there."

And yet, the metaphore of the "abyss" and "suspension" over it is not altogether appropriate, for in dread the concrete

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61. In 1949, this Postscript was amended for the fifth edition of the essay. Without notice, the text was changed here to read that Being is never without beings, and beings are never without Being (W. J. Richardson, S.J., Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1951, p. 562). Richardson pounces upon this change as terribly important, in fact builds his whole considerable book around this "radical reversal." He even refers to the "editor" as "Heidegger II." We fail to see what all the fuss is about. If the original text is translated as Richardson does: "Being indeed comes to be without beings....," then this is a statement wholly inconsistent with what Heidegger has so far been saying. Being only "comes to be" in beings - never as Being itself. The truth of the "difference" is that all beings have Being but do not themselves constitute Being. Hence, Being is "different" or "other" than, i.e., "without" beings. We see Heidegger's emendation of the original text (above) to be a clarification rather than a reversal in orientation. Our translators, R. F. C. Hull and Alan Crick, do not take the phrase wohl west quite so literally: as an expression of process, because the context is an explanation of precisely how Being is "without" beings when it is Nothing. See also above, p. 166, fn. 47.

62. p. 353f.

things at hand recede from us into the realm of the "wholly other" precisely because they become related to Being in accordance with the truth of Being. That is, in dread they are related to authentic Being and thus appear to recede into the overwhelmingly vast realm from whence they came originally - as in a movie run backwards. The awfully wierd reaction born in us in dread arises in the "recollection" of the truth of Being as it bears down upon us in this uncanny journey backwards into the aboriginal truth of Being. Wholly in terms of time, - and this is our interpretation of what Heidegger is saying - dread is a transcendent experience in which the flow of time is reversed. We seem to move from the present into the future, and from there to its birthplace in eternal futurity: that spring from which "time" issues without diminishing its inexhaustible supply.

We are confident that Heidegger avoids such an objectification of Time because, in the end, it treats it as an entity, a "thing" or "being." Though we are seeing all too clearly that temporality is his criterion for criticism of the history of ontology (metaphysics), we should also respect his explicit intent to maintain an "ontological" approach, rather than one that is, say, temporological. For it is impossible for ontic beings, e.g., finite human Da-sein, to escape preoccupation with "things." If we are tempted to classify his thought as "temporology," as opposed to "ontology," we misinterpret his intent. Time will always be "objectified" in the same way that God is



always objectified. Though "time" may be the one word that most typifies Heidegger's fundamental approach to philosophy, it fails altogether to do it justice if conceived either as a being or Being itself. Time, rather, is that which "criticises," i.e., judges, all beings, so that Being itself has its "prior" in "dis-essence," i.e., in Nothing. This is why Heidegger's thought necessarily surpasses "logic" and, indeed, the whole history of logical reckoning. His is an "intuitive" approach that bears witness to a profound "inwardness," an exquisite sensitivity to what religion terms the "Holy." The philosopher tries to articulate Being, while "the poet names what is holy."<sup>63</sup> If we have any difficulty with Heidegger at this point, it is in failing to see how he differs from the "poets," beyond the obvious point, that the "names" which they give to the "holy" are different. In any event, courage is characteristic of the man who says "Yes!" to essential dread, to the "terror of the abyss" where dwells "awe."<sup>64</sup> Such men command respect, whether Moses atop the holy mountain, or the philosopher who endures the Nothing.

"Courage can endure Nothing: it knows ... the all but untrodden region of Being, that 'clearing' from whence everything that 'is' returns<sup>64a</sup> into what it is and is able to be. Our lecture neither puts forward a 'Philosophy of Dread' nor seeks to give a false impression of being an 'heroic' philosophy. Its sole thought is that which dawned on Western thinking from the beginning as the one thing that has to be thought - Being. But Being is not a product of thought. It is more likely that thinking is an occurrence of Being."<sup>65</sup>

Our "animus against 'logic'" derives from the experience

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<sup>63</sup> p. 360.

<sup>64</sup> p. 355.

<sup>64a</sup> We understand this word "returns" as evidence for our suggestion immediately above that "the flow of time is reversed" in dread.

in dread of the truth of Being, an experience at the furthest remove from "exact" thinking as typified in "calculation." All calculation presupposes closed totality, an essential unity already given: hence, no "mystery" inheres, only temporary unknown quantities which calculation will soon resolve.<sup>66</sup>

To turn against "logic" in this era of scientific sovereignty, to courageously prefer the terrors of dread to the complacency of calculation, is to answer the "demands of Being" and "surrender" "in the freedom of sacrifice" to the "Need" "to preserve the truth of Being no matter what may happen to man and everything that is."<sup>67</sup> In such sacrifice there is "thanksgiving" for the "grace" with which "Being has endowed man...

"...in order that he may take over in his relationship to Being the guardianship of Being. ... Original thinking is the echo of Being's favor wherein it clears a space for itself and causes the unique occurrence: that beings are. ... The speechless answer of his thanking through sacrifice is the source of the human word, which is the prime cause of language as the enunciation of the Word in words."<sup>68</sup>

With these sentiments Heidegger pleads for some rudimentary understanding of his lecture as an expression on behalf of "inwardness" and "essential thinking" as over against that confident, opportunistic self-assurance which so characterizes the "calculating" orientation to the things that "are." He calls for "obedience to the voice of Being," for "thought which seeks the Word through which the truth of Being may be expressed." For, when "the language of historical man is born of the "Word,"

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65. p. 355f.

66. p. 358.

67. p. 358.

68. p. 358.



it rings true; it rises up "out of long-guarded speechlessness," that is, out of the Nothing when this latter is "conceived as pure 'Other' than what-is," i.e., the "veil of Being."<sup>69</sup> Is it not evident that...

"...In Being all that comes to pass in beings is perfected from everlasting"<sup>70</sup>

#### 4. Interlude

The reader no doubt registers a measure of surprise when traditionally "religious" metaphores are brought to the service of philosophy which, for its part, has equally traditionally rejected such imprecise and intuitive language. But what else? Is not Heidegger's usage of poetic metaphore a singular testimony to the primacy or originality - in the "primordial" sense - of his intent? Moreover, does it not show his profound respect for the "poet" and what he attempts to do: to name the Holy? The poet's kinship to the metaphysician - though they "dwell near to one another on mountains farthest apart"<sup>71</sup> - is well attested in Heidegger's several tributes to and studies of his favorite poet, Hölderlin.<sup>72</sup> But here, within a philosophical work - indeed, within the context of thought that brings to end the history of metaphysics - is the strongest evidence of their communion.

In a way, we should almost anticipate Heidegger's concluding this "Postscript" with a clear-cut reference to eternal

69. p. 360. 70. p. 360.

71. From Hölderlin's "Patmos" as quoted by Heidegger, p. 360.

72. See two of Heidegger's essays, "Remembrance of the Poet" and "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry," pp. 243-91.

duration, i.e., "...from everlasting," for, throughout the works we have been examining he consistently criticizes metaphysical thought from the point of view of priority, i.e., from the vantage point of futurity. How else can one see "history" except he stand outside it in ek-sistenz? How else can one see a particular "thing" als solches except he see it "whole" (im Ganze) and from a sufficient "distance" to enable an encircling, all-encompassing perspective (Weltentwurf)? How else can one be objective about that which has happened in time except he thoughtfully take his "stance" "outside" objectified time (history), that is, in its future (Ferne)? Only by reversing the flow of time and moving, so to speak, counter to its natural propensity are we afforded an "historical" perspective. Is it not our common experience to move ahead of the present situation in order to see "what" it "is"? And, by so doing to precipitate a "flow" of "events" or situations? Yet, we cannot be said to be responsible for this "moving ahead." For, we cannot move except we are first moved, i.e., "enabled." We say that the future reveals itself as "becoming present," but it is never apprehended as "future," but only as already "present," i.e., as already become, "is" now. In consequence, however, of its continuous "be-coming," we are enabled to move to the next moment, and to take a prior point of view relative to the "present" and to see "it" as something "manifest," just as we see our "selves." Hence, there is always presupposed in human activity the prior enabling power of the future. The always-future is therefore that which is revealed as making possible all ontic.

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temporal-spatial phenomena. Hence, the notions of finitude vs. infinitude, time vs. eternity, beings vs. Being, something vs. Nothing, etc., etc.. In each of these, we have an instance of fundamental "difference." The knowledge of this difference is simply the "apprehending intuition" of that primordial unity by which all "units" are named, i.e., the "horizon of all possible unity," which is future (Chapter III, below). When employed in the habitual, vulgar, "pre-ontological" way, the primacy of this priority is forgotten along with its meaning. "Meaning" can accrue only from difference, i.e., "differentiation": the thoughtful recognition of finitude in the face of infinitude, for example.

Heidegger's emphasis upon the "ontological difference" is an emphasis upon priority and how "temporality," when seen to be fundamentally different from atemporality, i.e., the always-future, affords the reclamation of meaning from an otherwise meaningless, i.e., inauthentic, existence. As we shall see, ek-sistenz becomes another single-word expression for the priority afforded finite human Da-sein in virtue of the "enabling" of the always-future. It gives to ex-sistence an Archimedean point outside, and with it, the responsibility for recalling the truth of Being.

Now, always to be understood in such formulations as these, is the salutary fact that any reference we make to "eternal futurity" is always relative to already existing Da-sein. This is why Da-sein is the focus of all Heidegger's deliberation.

From his vantage-point "outside" "historical" existence, that is, from ex-sistence, Heidegger is enabled, as are all men if they wish, to see the transient relativity of the Dasein as it "factually" exists, and to understand it in terms of the eternal truth of Being, that is, in terms of the Überstiegen which enables this view. Thus, "meaning" returns to all that heretofore had become meaningless in virtue of the Nihilism inhering in a view that cannot see "beyond" relativity. Insight into relativity and historicity, however, utilizes "priority" as its critical criterion, but does not recognize it as futurity. Nor does it perceive that futurity is "one" with the ever-future. Relativity as a phenomenon is impossible to recognize apart from a static standard or absolute. Except this absolute be already "given,"<sup>73</sup> relativity could not be perceived. Heidegger, then, has simply disclosed the standard by which all is measured, and re-discovered meaning for existing Da-sein so that his life may not be a void.

His, however, is no cosmology. He does not suggest that his doctrine has any relevance beyond death. Indeed, he no doubt holds that "life after death" is a fiction if only because it is without that fundamental "difference" which characterizes everything of which we have any knowledge. If futurity is characteristic of Da-sein, then all that can be said is that once the future fails to come-to-presence, then the difference is

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73. We note this formula as characteristic of Kant's and Heidegger's analytical approach, and observe that it is one both of fundamental acceptance or affirmation of this present moment, and wonder-full, yet questioning, response - in the sense of asking: What shall we do with it? What does it tell it calls "presence" into question and, if responsible, for from the "gift" back to the "giver."



gone, and Da-sein dis-"integrates." And with disintegration goes "identity." Beyond Da-sein we can know nothing of Sein. Whatever may lie beyond death is "of the mystery." Can one go beyond the absolute? Suffice it to say, that once ex-sistence ceases, as in death, then eternal futurity is of no consequence. The thought of eternal futurity assumes present ex-sistence as already given in this moment now. Apart from this "stance" there is no thinking; hence, only Nothing.

Heidegger's "Postscript" has included insight which is obtained only from his understanding of "The Essence of Truth," and has served as something of an introduction to it. We move, then, quite naturally into the realm whence he attempts to bring all we have studied full circle. The "Kantbook" disclosed that Kant's "transcendental unity of apperception" was rooted in the future, that is, in the "horizon of all possible unity." Thus was it disclosed that Temporality is the Being of Da-sein. "The Essence of Ground" established that "transcendence" is the "realm" of the free act of grounding, and that Da-sein is transcendence, freedom, and future. Now we have seen in "What is Metaphysics?" that Being has its "dis-essence" in the Nothing as revealed to the Da-sein in dread. And we have interpreted this to mean that Being is "grounded," as it were, in the unfathomable ever-future. We have now to see how the "essence of truth" is at the same time the truth of essence.

However, before proceeding to the essay in question, we observe <sup>again</sup> that Heidegger's total program as laid down in

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72. See above, Chapter II, p. 52f.

the Introduction to Being and Time was never completed "as such." For the projected third section of the First Half a "reversal" was envisaged. Nothing was said about this "reversal" until the letter to Jean Beaufret was published in 1947. In this "Humanismusbriefer,"<sup>75</sup> Heidegger states that this third section was purposefully withheld until the right words could be found for it. Traditional metaphysics (ontology) had been no help. Indeed, after the lecture (in 1930) on "The Essence of Truth" which this letter indicates was the closest he had come by then to formulating the reversal required for this third section, those portions of it which dealt specifically with this "reversal" were rewritten many times before its final publication in 1943.<sup>76</sup> - thirteen years later. So that sixteen years in all were required after "Being and Time" was published to formulate this all-important third section of the First Half, the half given over to the phenomenological analysis of Da-sein. Is it not fair to say, then, that "Being and Time" can hardly be understood properly until one has followed a course not unlike the one we are taking: that leads to this pivotal essay?

Also to be especially noted is the fact that the problem of truth is treated in considerable detail in "Being and Time" at two different places. First, in the Introduction, a treatment we have already considered in detail; and secondly, at the close of the "preliminary analysis of Dasein" as "Care," and therefore immediately prior to the final analysis of Dasein as

75. Über den Humanismus, Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt, 1947.

76. Ibid. p. 17.



Temporality.<sup>77</sup> It stands, therefore, between Parts One and Two. Thus, had "Time and Being" come to expression at the time of publication, we would have had a final discussion of Truth at the end of "Being and Time," and therefore a triple emphasis on Truth as the "answer" to the original question which precipitated the whole program, namely, the question of the "meaning" of Being.<sup>78</sup>

In anticipation of this pivotal essay, we offer a tentative guide to its interpretation. Heidegger's prime concern, though more often implicit than explicit, is to maintain a constant and equal tension between Dasein and Da-sein, historical existence and ex-sistence, beings and Being, something and Nothing, etc., throughout his thought. For, it is precisely in the maintenance of this difficult tension between opposites that the "ontological difference" becomes - along with "identity" - an "experience" of ex-sisting Da-sein, and therefore the experience both of the "oblivion of Being" and "the manifest character of beings." Only in this tension does the factically existing Dasein enter the realm of the ex-sisting Da-sein which is of the essence of freedom, i.e., future, i.e., Being, i.e., Truth. Yet, he never abides in this realm for long, but only in "error." Hence, even in this essay on the essence of truth, we find "ontological difference" reflected in the dis-essence of truth as "error." If we keep this "difference" as a tension in full view, we may be able to navigate these treacherous waters of

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77. Being and Time, pp. 256-73.

78. See the word, *Ibid*, p. 19.

Heideggerian thought without crashing onto rocks at either side.

Heidegger's intent is to ground a "fundamentally new attitude to history,"<sup>79</sup> an attitude that centers upon the Da-sein (in contrast to the Dasein) as alone capable of being "historical." For the Da-sein "into which we can enter" is of the essence of freedom, i.e., futurity, and in consequence transcends history. In so doing, it "brings it to end," so to speak, by changing its course, by diverting it by means of the "new" understanding which the Da-sein uncovers or reveals from its source in primal concealment (original truth).

Now, perhaps, we are prepared to encounter this essay which intends to bring all we have studied full circle so that unity in every way consistent with itself emerges.

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79. p. 323.



## Chapter VI

## "The Essence of Truth"

In contrast to our usual procedure, we will depart somewhat from straightforward exposition in order to maintain, if possible, a degree of circumspection. For, in this essay, the "steps" taken in the argument are fully as significant as the argument itself.

"The line of thought follows to all appearances the way of metaphysics, but at the same time, as regards its decisive steps - those leading from truth as rightness to ex-sistent freedom and from this to untruth as dissimulation and error - it effects a change in the direction of the enquiry, a change which properly belongs to the conquest (Überwindung) of metaphysics."<sup>1</sup>

This helpful hint Heidegger included in a brief "Note" which he appended when the essay was published: a hint which cannot be ignored.

The essay's "subject" is truth: not particular ontical truths, but ontological truth, i.e., truth in general: that one truth which covers all particular truths and makes it possible for them to be "true." The way of the argument, then, must lead from particular truths, that is, from our vague, pre-ontological knowledge of truth as reflected, say, in "common sense."<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, we begin with "the conventional concept of truth." This concept employs as synonyms for truth such terms as "real," "genuine," and "right" as characteristic of the "correspondance," or "agreement" (Übereinstimmung) inhering between a "true" state-

1. Existence and Being, Gateway Edition, Henry Regnery Co., Chicago, 1960, p. 323 - hereafter referred to in this chapter only by page number.
2. p. 292f.

ment, or proposition (Satz), about something and the thing itself.<sup>3</sup> But there are two levels of "agreement" involved here: that between the thing itself and the "idea of it as conceived in advance," and that between the thing itself and the statement about it. The traditional definition of truth illustrates this double aspect if one admits of its reversibility. Veritas est adaequatio rei et intellectus can suggest both the approximation of perception to a thing, where the "thing" is determinative, and the approximation of a thing to perception when the latter is determinative.<sup>4</sup> These two approaches to truth have their roots in history. The former characterizes the medieval approach and the latter Kant's revolutionary transcendental conception. Medieval Christian doctrine, presupposing "creation," holds that the possibility of "true" knowledge is grounded in the way that proposition and "thing" equally conform with "idea," i.e., λογος, and therefore abide in the unity of the divine creative Word.<sup>5</sup> The secular equivalent to this doctrine, i.e., the one that repudiates "creation" and "divine plan," nevertheless retains the notion of "conformity" even though it tries to give the impression of being independent of any explanation as to the essential nature of beings as such. It relies instead upon the self-evident intelligibility of the "logical."<sup>6</sup> These similar doctrines also hold that in contrast to "self-evident" truth, there is also untruth as the consequence of non-conformity with the idea, all ideas together con-

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3. p. 294f.

4. p. 295.

5. p. 296.

6. p. 297.



stituting the world-order, the totality of truth. These doctrines have become the predominant notions of truth: truth is "propositional" in essence: the "agreement" of a proposition with its object when this latter is reduced to idea.<sup>7</sup>

Once the conformity theory of truth is seen to be the dominant one, then the typical Heideggerian question is put: What constitutes the inner possibility of there being a conformity in the first place? It cannot rest in an "essential" agreement comparable to that inhering, say, between two coins of the same species. Coins are of metal, round, and are legal tender in commerce. Propositions, on the other hand, have absolutely nothing in common with coins in this physical sense, yet are said to conform with them when "true." In what, then, does this conformity, or agreement, consist? Here Heidegger contends that the essential relation between propositions and their objects is that of "representation."

"The statement about the coin relates 'itself' to this thing by representing it and saying of the thing represented 'how it is,' 'what it is like,' in whatever respect is important at the moment."<sup>8</sup>

That is to say, the statement: This coin is bent! is considered to be true and relevant if a vending machine rejects it. At another time, one might also say of it: This coin was minted in 1901, or, It is worn. All such propositions would be "true" if they represented the coin exactly, that is, as it "is." These acts of representation, however, require that the person making such statements about the coin take up a position relative

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7. p. 298.

8. p. 300.

to it, i.e., in opposition to it. He must let it be "there" as an object in its own right, entirely independent of him. When this happens, it lies, as it were, over "there" - across an open space, across an "open" realm of "relation."<sup>9</sup> When lying "there," it can be said to manifest "behavior" in the sense both of coming across the open area towards the person opposite, and of remaining all the while "there." In the same way, the person relating to the coin can be said to "behave"; he traverses the open area to the coin, all the while retaining his position "opposite." Both modes of behavior are thus "overt," or accessible, "as such." By remaining in the opposed position, each remains overt, or accessible, to the other so that the open area of relation may be traversed again and again, thereby enabling a whole series of representations: The coin is bent, was minted in 1901, is worn, etc.

Representative statements "right themselves" according to the "behavior" of the object in question. It "traverses" the open area of relation and "presents" itself, and so furnishes the standard by which a re-representative statement is to conform in rightness or truth.<sup>10</sup> But the Da-sein also traverses the openness, so that it can generally be said that "overt" behavior itself makes possible the "rightness" of conformity.<sup>11</sup> But what, then, makes this overt behavior possible? Again, the Heideggerian regression in terms of "possibility." Always he seeks the more "primordial" ground.

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9. p. 300f.

10. p. 301.

11. p. 302.



Before answering this question, we might pause long enough to see that Heidegger has already robbed "propositional" truth of its sovereignty by shifting priority from the proposition to the object which the proposition represents, and upon which it is dependent. Thus is it shown that ontical beings themselves are prior to what may be said about them.<sup>12</sup> That is to say, Heidegger's is the Kantian approach to the extent that the object, as "given," determines what may be said of it.

In trying to determine what makes possible this open or manifest behavior of things, Heidegger attacks at that point where a representative statement "receives its command to right itself" in accord with its object's self-representation. "Why...

"...does this accord at the same time determine the nature of truth? How, in fact, can there be such a thing at all as approximation to a pre-established criterion, or a directive enjoining such an accord?"<sup>13</sup>

Because, he answers, there is already manifest a condition which releases beings to "manifest" behavior so that their representations can be bound together in the relation of truth. That condition is freedom. Freedom sets beings free to "behave." In the resulting "manifestation" of their behavior, they stand in a "relation" which itself reflects the freedom which originally released them.<sup>14</sup> That is, when released to manifest behavior, they stand, as behaving: actively opposed to each other out "there" in the open area of relation. The "fact" of their opposition, of their approximation, of their accord with

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12. p. 302.

13. p. 302.

14. p. 303.

each other, that is, the fact of their "relation" itself is the essence of truth. And this fact is but evidence of freedom. Hence, "freedom is the essence of truth itself."<sup>15</sup>

Now, ...

"... 'essence' is understood here as the basis of the inner possibility of whatever is accepted in the first place and generally admitted as 'known.'"<sup>16</sup>

This formula, "the basis of the inner possibility" is by now familiar. It figures prominently wherever we go as the "critical" criterion in Heideggerian thought. It paved the way in the "Kantbook" not only for the laying of the foundation of metaphysics ala Kant, but also enabled the laying operation to proceed "yet more originally" to the "horizon of all possible unity" which, as the "self-affection" of time, is also "of the future" and "of the essence of Da-sein." This formula also paved the way for the discovery that freedom is the essence of "ground" as it is "strewn" by the Da-sein according to a tripartite temporalization process which has its roots in futurity. And no less in "What is Metaphysics?" did we find this formula moving the analysis inexorably towards "dread" as the "essential mood" of the Da-sein, the mood that reveals the Nothing, i.e., the "oblivion of Being," in immediate contrast to the manifest character of beings. Here too, futurity is the realm of the Nichts. Now, with this latest disclosure that "freedom is the essence of truth itself," we are faced with a whole series of possible correlative elements: Freedom, says Heidegger,

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15. p. 303.

16. p. 303 (my italics).



is the essence of truth. Now, the essence of Da-sein, Ground, Being, Nothing, and the "horizon of all possible unity" is "of the future." In consequence, we begin to suspect that "freedom" and "futurity" are correlates - but more than "suspect," really, for, in "The Essence of Ground" we found that transcendence is freedom and therefore future. Indeed, we need not have looked so far afield for the basis of this correlation. It lies "in the inner possibility of whatever is accepted in the first place and generally admitted as 'known.'"

Heidegger himself gives us an example of this kind of correlation:

"The crucial question regarding the 'meaning,' i.e., the realm of projection, i.e., the manifest character, i.e., the truth, of Being..."<sup>17</sup>

"Though deliberately left undeveloped" in this essay, this formulation of the steps from the "meaning" to the "truth" of Being is no less a relation of accord. The "meaning" of Being is the "truth" of Being. Freedom, then, as "the essence of truth itself," is the meaning not only of Being, but also of Da-sein, ex-sistence, etc., and itself is of the essence of futurity. Hence, time appears in every analysis as the a priori criterion for criticism and analysis, and issues ultimately in that species of time which is always future. To be sure, it is still too early to say that Heidegger in this essay states that the essence of truth is futurity, and thereby confirms this massive correlation, but has he not already shown his hand

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17. p. 323 ("Concluding Note").

with this explicit reference to "essence" as the "basis of the inner possibility of..."?

Heidegger has said, "The essence of truth is freedom itself." Before attempting to clarify and explain why this is so, he observes that this correlation of truth with freedom leaves wide open the possibility that truth is abandoned to the caprice of man. Especially does this appear to be so when one considers that "guile and dissimulation,<sup>17a</sup> lies and deception, fraud and pretence, in short, all manner of untruth, are ascribed to man."<sup>18</sup> But he argues that the human origin of untruth...

"...merely confirms by contrast the essential nature of truth 'as such' which holds sway 'over' man and which metaphysics regard as something imperishable and eternal, something that can never be founded on the transitoriness and fragility of humankind."<sup>19</sup>

How, then, one might ask, can truth have a stable basis in human freedom? The answer to this requires an examination of the essential nature of freedom.

The connection between truth and freedom has been shown to be "rightness," i.e., that "approximation" which is constituted when the overt behavior of beings becomes manifest in the open area of relation in virtue of their being set free to act. The directive to "right" a proposition with the manifest behavior

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17a. We accept our translator's choice of "dissimulation" for Heidegger's term Verbergung and "concealment" for Verbergen. The former's equation with "dissemblance (Webster's Collegiate Dictionary) and our previous discussion of "semblance" (See above, pp. 42ff.) give this admittedly clumsy term sufficient meaning to warrant its use.

18. p. 304.

19. p. 304.



of its object is enjoined by freedom itself. For, it provides the pattern that propositional truth is to follow: a proposition is right, i.e., true, only when it represents its object as it "is," i.e., as "free" to "be." It "is" as it "behaves" in the "open," a behavior which both traverses the open area of relation in a self-presentation, and remains "there" all the while.<sup>20</sup> It "is" to the extent that it is free.

Heidegger's concern in this exposition of freedom is primarily from the point of view of the Da-sein.<sup>21</sup> So, he speaks in terms of the Da-sein's behavior relative to the "things" that "are." That which is manifest and to which a representative statement approximates in rightness "is that which obviously 'is' all of the time and has some manifest form or behavior."<sup>22</sup> The freedom that allows the revelation of such behavior also "lets" whatever is acting "there" be what it is. Therefore, freedom is manifest in the Da-sein when it "lets" beings be what they are. Heidegger reduces this formula simply to "letting-be,"<sup>23</sup> a phrase reminiscent of our occasional complaint to others: Let me be! Leave me alone! Let me be as I am! Don't

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20. pp. 300f. and 305.

21. It is conceivable that other beings might have an interest in "truth" as accord with freedom, but we have yet to discover evidence for same. In relation with other beings which are not Da-sein, we behave "overtly," i.e., we traverse the open and remain in an opposed position, just as they do. But, we are "concerned" for the character of this relation, for whether it is perceived truly or not, while they seem to reflect no such interest. In the light of this discussion of the nature of truth, however, we must leave the matter open, for, if they are allowed to "be" as they "are," we might possibly discover that they too are concerned in their own way. Who knows how what secrets the future will reveal to future generations?

22. p. 305.

23. p. 305.

meddle! Such is exactly what Heidegger means, but his emphasis is upon the "other," i.e., upon the object about which statements are made. Freedom, as manifest in Da-sein, is letting the "other" be as it is.

But this does not mean turning away from it. On the contrary, it means turning towards it even more, but in an attitude that manifests the freedom to let it be as it is, and not as we are wont to pre-conceive it. Hence, freedom as an attitude of openness towards the precise nature of that which is opposed in relation. An element of mystery, of that which is yet to be revealed, therefore, abides. Such an attitude, Heidegger contends, characterized those who gave birth to Western thought, for, they conceived this "openness" as ἀ-ἀφεικία, the unconcealed.<sup>24</sup> Hence, revealment; letting-be reveals. It...

"...exposes itself to what-is-as-such and brings all behavior into the open. 'Letting-be,' i.e., freedom, is in its own self 'ex-posing' (aus-setzend) and 'ex-sistent' (ek-sistent)."<sup>25</sup>

Yet, at any given moment, freedom, as "a participation in the revealment of what-is-as-such (das Seiende als ein solches). "guarantees" that what is disclosed to ex-sistence is actually the "there" of what "is," i.e., its da-sein.<sup>26</sup> This means that Da-sein can have perfect confidence that what is revealed to it "at the moment" "is" what is "there," i.e., is what is "manifest" in the open area of relation. If at another, later, time it should be revealed to "be" slightly different, this later revel-

<sup>24</sup>. p. 306.

<sup>25</sup>. p. 306f.

<sup>26</sup>. p. 307.



ation would not detract from what was earlier seen. Rather, this later "change" in appearance depends upon the former. Together they disclose a segment of history, the history of existence, revelation, a history that is built upon the temporal character of freedom as fundamentally future.

"Letting-be," then, as an activity of Da-sein, an activity that is fundamentally historical, not only reveals beings "as such," but dis-closes the Da-sein itself to be ex-posing, and therefore ex-sistent, i.e., free. In Da-sein is preserved "that long un-fathomed and essential basis on which man is able to ex-sist" in an "ex-position into the revealed nature of beings as such."<sup>27</sup>

"Still unfathomed and not even conscious of the need for any deeper fathoming of its essence, the ex-sistence of historical man begins at that moment when the first thinker to ask himself about the revealed nature of beings poses the question: What is what-is? With this question unconcealment and revelation are experienced for the first time."<sup>28</sup>

And this history continues so long as this question is posed in its basic originality by each subsequent generation. For, this question includes within it both a firm notion of what what-is is ("what-is" = das Seiende), and an open attitude of genuine questioning (What is ...?).

We are quick to rise to this significant statement about the "beginning" of the history of Western thought. For, we cannot over-stress the point made earlier<sup>29</sup> that Heidegger, for all his apparent concentration upon ontology, is nevertheless

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27. p. 307f.

28. p. 308 (our italics).

29. Above, p. 12.

disclosing, so far as the history of metaphysics is concerned, "a fundamentally new attitude to history."<sup>30</sup> Indeed, we would put the matter more strongly: he is working out in terms of metaphysics a philosophy of history. He sticks to metaphysics because this discipline is the only one that is "basically" interested in the Being of the beings that are manifest. This interest, because it is ontology, takes infinite pains with the particular being "as such," and moves on up the ladder to gather up the "totality" of beings, which includes man, the historian. The problem of "objectification," whether it be a phenomenon of Nature or an "event" of history, is, as has been shown, a metaphysical problem. And since Heidegger's methodology singles out the relation which Time has with Being, his is primarily a concern to solve, as it were, the problem of history, the problem of the inter-relations of all beings as these relations are revealed over a period of time. The history of metaphysics, beginning with the pre-Socratics, has ended with an explication of relativism and Nietzschean Nihilism. Heidegger seeks the "meaning," i.e., the truth, of Being by means of Time so that the meaning, i.e., the truth of history may be shown.

To spend so much time in an investigation of "transcendental objectification" as the mode of Da-sein's existence may at first seem to be at the furthest remove from an attempt to solve the problem of history, but...

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30. p. 323.



"Only where das Seiende is expressly raised to the power of its own revelation and preserved there, only where this preservation [as "letting-be"] is conceived as the quest for das Seiende als ein solches, only there does history begin."<sup>31</sup>

History begins with the question: What is what-is?, a question that is the formulation of the "ontological difference." "What is ...?" implies Seinsverständnis, and "what-is" implies ontical knowledge. Or, in temporal terms, this "basic" question contains a "former" perception (what-is) and a quest for a "later" one - one that will be in the former's future (What is ...?). This quest for a later perception is an "historical" quest, a quest for change: a change, perhaps, that will approximate that which so characterizes man's basic experience of himself, a change, perhaps, which may afford some clue to self-understanding, i.e., will disclose "meaning," truth, freedom.

"The initial revelation of what-is-in-totality (das Seiende im Ganzen), the quest for what-is-as-such, and the beginning of the history of the West, are one and the same thing and are contemporaneous in a 'time' which, itself immeasurable [eternal futurity?], alone opens the Manifest to every kind of measurement."<sup>32</sup>

The "new" is sought in preference to the "old" when the primal question is put. For, the "new" has adhering to it something of the future, something of that "immeasurable" time which is the horizon of all possible unity, and which pre-ontological knowledge pre-supposes without knowing it, but is fascinated none the less. Freedom adheres to the "new," and the "old" smacks of servitude.

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31. p. 308.

32. p. 308.

But the connection between the "new" and the "old" must be seen to be all-important, for, this "connection" is the "difference." It is the "difference" that makes the basic question "basic." The "difference" is the "exposition" of both the "old" and the "new." Hence, the Da-sein, as ex-position, "as the letting-be of what-is, sets man free for his 'freedom.'" But man can only choose between actual possibilities and actual necessities. Where "freedom" is associated with "possibilities," non-freedom, or servitude, is linked with "necessity." Hence, man does not possess "freedom," but is possessed by it, and in such a manner that it alone - not man - makes possible his relation to what-is-in-totality, and to history which is characterized by this relation.<sup>33</sup> "Only ex-sistent man is historical. 'Nature' has no history."<sup>34</sup>

When freedom is understood as letting what-is "be," the nature of truth is fulfilled and perfected as unconcealment, revealment. That is, truth is the revelation of what-is, but in the sense that it is the answer to the "basic question." It must therefore include an element of futurity as well as presence. For, there must be an ex-position, a movement away from the present "closed" attitude to what-is and into the open so that revelation can take place. For revelation to take place, something must be dis-covered, dis-closed, revealed. Truth, as Heidegger conceives it, is a movement, a process, an evolution. In terms of man, truth is "behavior," and not some

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33. p. 306f.

34. p. 309.



static propositional form that can be written down. And because all behavior is "overt," or out in the "open," Heidegger can say...

"All human behavior is an exposition into that overtiness. Hence, man is in virtue of his ex-sistence."<sup>35</sup>

Man's ability to let things be more than they "are" at the moment is made possible by freedom, and this "enabling" by freedom receives its due in the sense that man's ideas must conform to freedom's inner directive to approximate itself, i.e., freedom.<sup>36</sup> But man's propositions accord to what-is at the moment, and in consequence have become subject to the "basic question," and are subordinate to those observations which embody further revelation, and so on and on ad infinitum. Thus evolves a "history" of ideas and propositions, i.e., the history of thought. Indeed, ...

"...history and all its possibilities [are] guaranteed ... in the revelation of what-is-in-totality. The manner in which the original nature of truth comes to be (weat) gives rise to the rare and simple decisions of history."<sup>37</sup>

Historical man's problem, then, is this: Just what is what-is? That is to say, the vision of absolute unity that abides at the horizon of all possible unity "comes" to ex-sis-ting Da-sein, and hangs as a dense fog over all that "is," obscuring definitive outlines, so that he must look to that "horizon" in order to dis-cover what had heretofore remained in concealment, mystery. Man cannot let what-is be what it is

35. p. 309.

36. p. 309.

37. p. 309.

because futurity, i.e., concealment, adheres to what-is in the guise of its own unity "as such." To ex-sistence, what-is is problematical, and because it is, history evolves as the record of man's "simple decisions" about the precise nature of what-is, these decisions being "propositional" and therefore "relative," or in "error." But relativity is not the base problem. Rather, the root problem arise when "the essential negation of truth, its 'dis-essence' (Unwesen) makes its appearance."<sup>38</sup> Now, if truth, i.e., freedom, is not a property of man, then it follows that untruth cannot be simply a consequence of man's inability and negligence. "Truth and untruth are not in essence indifferenct to each other."<sup>39</sup> We have now to see how the full explication of truth, according to Heidegger, unfolds so as to reveal untruth to be truth's dis-essence.

"The essence of truth has revealed itself as freedom. This is the ex-sistent, revelatory 'letting-be' of what-is." In overt behavior, the Da-sein, as we saw earlier,<sup>40</sup> in order to let-be-as-is, projects out over and beyond the objects's presently conceived dimensions of being - out towards the unknown totality of all that is. For, "...the manifest character of what-is-in-totality is not identical with the sum of known actualities."<sup>41</sup> Indeed, this "in-totality" ...

"...appears, in the field of vision of our daily calculations and activities, as something incalculable and incomprehensible. It cannot be understood in terms of what manifestly 'is;' whether this be a part of nature or of history. Although itself ceaselessly determining all things, this

<sup>38</sup>. p. 310.  
<sup>41</sup>. p. 311.

<sup>39</sup>. p. 310.

<sup>40</sup>. Chapter III above, p. 76  
et passim.



'in-totality' ... at the same time ... is not just nothing: it is a concealment of what-is in totality."<sup>42</sup>

It is precisely here with this "...at the same time..." that a basic change in emphasis is being introduced. The Da-sein's ex-position into the transcendental realm of openness, i.e., into Being and Nothing, has been the Überstieg which is always "excessive." Now we are to consider its correlate, namely, the Entzug, which brings <sup>it</sup> down to earth, so to speak, and ends with the position of what-is. Or, to put it another way, freedom as the essence of truth has to this point in the argument been the freedom to let something "other" be itself. Now, we are still speaking of "letting-be," but the emphasis has switched from "letting-" to the "-be." In order to let something "be," it is not enough simply to project out into the transcendental "incalculable" and "incomprehensible" realm of the totality of beings. This particular being "here" has to be narrowed down from incomprehensibility to comprehensibility, from transcendence to immanence. To do so requires the dissimulation of the transcendental world, and the simulation of ontic particularity in the "here and now."

"'Letting things be' is at once a concealment (Verbergen). In the ex-sistent freedom of Da-sein there is accomplished a dissimulation of what-is in totality and therein lies the concealment."<sup>43</sup>

Once "letting-be" lets something "be," concealment of what-is in totality is accomplished. The die is cast. Further revelation is rendered impossible, for the moment, at least.

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<sup>42</sup>. p. 312.

<sup>43</sup>. p. 312.

"Concealment denies revelation to being, ... it makes its own specific property the property of being."<sup>44</sup> Thus, concealment is non-revelation, and untruth and concealment become "specific of and peculiar to the nature of truth."

The "peculiar" thing about untruth and concealment is that they precede truth and revelation; they are prior.<sup>45</sup> That is, the dissimulation of what-is-in-totality, i.e., the "world," which is involved in letting this thing "be" what it is, is actually the dissimulation of what is already dissimulated. For, the "world" is a "transcendental." Hence, it is a mystery. And, if what-is-in-totality is dissimulated, then, so also is what-is-as-such. Unity, whether it is the unity of the "world," the unity of the "many" as a collective, or the unity of the single unity, is concealed in the "horizon of all possible unity." Mystery, then, "absolute mystery as such (the dissimulation of the already dissimulated) pervades the whole of man's Da-sein."<sup>46</sup>

"Da-sein, insofar as it ex-sists, reaffirms the first and most extreme non-revelation of all: authentic untruth. The authentic 'dis-essence' of truth - that is the mystery."<sup>47</sup>

Now, by "dis-essence" is not meant pre-essence, or something that precedes essence. Rather, "...it means a de-naturing of that already reduced essence."<sup>48</sup> Dis-essence is essential to - is not indifferent to - essence.

"For those who know, the 'dis-' of the initial dis-essence,

<sup>44</sup>. p. 313.  
<sup>48</sup>. p. 314.

<sup>45</sup>. p. 313.

<sup>46</sup>. p. 313.

<sup>47</sup>. p. 313.



as also the 'un-' of untruth, point into the still unexplored region of the truth of Being, and not merely of beings."<sup>49</sup>

Perhaps this point should be expanded. Freedom, "understood as the letting-be of what-is," is primarily "a relation of open resolve." That is, the "resolution" to reveal what-is-as-such is the Da-sein's response to the command to be free. Yet, in turning to what-is in terms of revealing it as it "is," the Da-sein conceals the affinity which freedom has with revelation. In consequence, this occupation with "beings," in which context the Da-sein finds its own "self," is at the same time a forgetting of the essential mystery which precedes all that "is."<sup>50</sup> Even when turned towards the ultimate mystery, such turning is necessarily always in terms of the things that "are." For man there is no immediate turning towards the mystery, i.e., towards Being, in all its primordial purity, for one cannot turn towards... Nothing.

"Wherever the dissimulation of what-is in totality is admitted only by the way, as a boundary which occasionally impinges, dissimulation as the ground-phenomenon of Da-sein is lost in oblivion."<sup>51</sup>

Heidegger's point here is that once the priority of Being is seen, then this, at first glance, seems to solve many problems, but in actual fact, when pressed home, all disappears in mystery. Not one single solitary being however insignificant and simple, not one event of all that have ever happened however common and taken for granted, - no "thing" and no "event" has ever been exclusive of the all-encompassing grasp of Being.

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<sup>49</sup>. p. 314.

<sup>50</sup>. p. 314f.

<sup>51</sup>. p. 315.

All have been subject to dissimulation. For, all have "been." Thus, all have been the products, so to speak, of the dissimulation of the Da-sein: the dissimulation of the already dissimulated Being of beings, i.e., the truth of Being.

This is a very important point! Much has been made so far of the "ontological difference" and how this dialectic appears to effect a balance between Being and beings, each dependent on the other. But when the balance is destroyed with the insight that Being is ultimately prior to all beings, then there is no balance at all, no Archimedean point outside this "difference" which locates ex-sistent Da-sein in transcendence. For, Da-sein is Da-. Sein has precedence over Da-sein. Both existence and ex-sistence (inauthentic and authentic existence, respectively) are forms, as we shall see momentarily, of insistence - in virtue of the Da.

Yet, the obviation of the mystery in dissimulation does not get rid of it. It remains, but in a form most unlikely. Historical man, forgetting the oblivion of Being, is forced in consequence to rely upon himself and his measures of all that "is." He builds up his "world" and records his "history" "out of whatever intentions and needs happen to be the most immediate, filling [them] out with projects and plans."<sup>2</sup> Thus, he becomes, and continues to be, the measure of all things. And without anything else to cling to, he insists



upon continuing to do just this. As ex-sisting, Da-sein is also in-sistent.

"But the mystery dwells also in in-sistence though here the mystery is the forgotten essence of truth now become 'inessential.'"<sup>53</sup>

Thus, we find in ex-sistence a turning away, a "reversal," a turning back - away from the mystery - and in in-sistence, a turning towards the things of which Da-sein is the measure.<sup>54</sup> The Da-sein's is a kind of back and forth "drifting from the mystery to the practicable and from one practicability to the next, always missing the mystery..."<sup>55</sup> This is erring.

"Man errs. He does not merely fall into error, he lives in error always because, by ex-sisting, he in-sists and is thus already in error. ... Error is part of the inner-structure of Da-sein, in which historical man is involved. ... Error is the essential counter-essence of the original essence of truth. It opens out as the manifest theatre for all counter-play to essential truth. Error is ... the basis of Wrong."<sup>56</sup>

And Wrong is not the isolated mistake; it is "the empire, the whole history of all the complicated and intricate ways of erring." In a word, Wrong "is essentially one with the manifest character of beings."<sup>57</sup>

But strangely enough, the way of erring makes possible man's not allowing himself to be led astray. It makes possible the "experience of error and thus the recalling of the mystery of Da-sein."<sup>58</sup> This remarkable turn is due to the fact that "error always oppresses in one way or another." Man suffers in consequence of erring; "he lives in an extremity

53. p. 316.

54. p. 316f.

55. p. 317.

56. p. 317.

57. p. 316.

58. p. 318.

of compulsion." Compulsively and impulsively he turns this way and that "but always into misery, ... into need."<sup>59</sup> "Misery" and "need," then, deriving as they do from error, make possible man's turning towards the mystery. For, the desperation inhering in misery provokes a turning in every direction. The apparent loss of freedom in misery's "necessity" can precipitate a chance turning towards the mystery.

With this, we reach something of a plateau, the heights of which afford a view of most all that we have been dealing with in this essay:

"The revelation of beings as such is at the same time the concealment of the totality of beings [both in the individual and the collective sense]. In this simultaneity of revealing and concealing, error has sway. Both the dissimulation of the already dissimulated [mystery] and error belong to the original essence of truth. Freedom, consisting in the in-sistent ex-sistence of Da-sein, is the essence of truth - in the sense of propositional rightness - only because freedom itself springs from the original essence of truth, from the reign of mystery in error."<sup>60</sup>

In this condensed formulation we can make out a correlation which we have been anxious to find. When Heidegger says that "freedom is the essence of truth itself," we interpret "essence" in terms of "openness," as analagous to Being's "presence" in beings. Truth, so conceived, is "open," apparent; it can be discerned to be operative. It makes possible both in-sistence and ex-sistence. But truth's "apparent" essence must also be seen in the light of its "original essence" which we take to be analagous to the Nothing, namely, mystery, dis-essence, un-truth. "The authentic 'dis-essence' of truth - that is the mystery."<sup>61</sup>

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59. p. 318.

60. p. 319.



Now, "error" does not fit into this correlation at all. It, rather, is said to be "the essential counter-essence of the original essence of truth."<sup>62</sup> Error is the manifestation neither of truth nor freedom in the same way the "beings" are the manifestation neither of truth nor freedom. Yet, beings are "of" Being and error is "of" truth and freedom.

With this correlation of truth with Being, we are prepared for the "reversal" of which Heidegger spoke in the "Humanismusbriefer," the reversal involved in the transition from "Being and Time" to "Time and Being." In this essay he puts it this way: "...the essence of truth is bound up with the truth of essence..."<sup>63</sup> And in the "Postscript" to "What is Metaphysics?," he put it this way: "...supposing that not merely what-is comes from Being but that, in a manner still more original, Being itself reposes in its truth and that the truth of Being is a function of the Being of truth..."<sup>64</sup> We understand this "reversal" to be as follows:

The "meaning" of Being, which is also the "truth" of Being, has been shown to be "concealed" in "dis-essence," i.e., Nothing, Absolute Mystery. This was shown by means of a "temporal" analytic in which the ever-future (our formulation) is thought to be time's dis-essence, and so, eternal, i.e., mysterious. That is to say, the analyses have been moved along in virtue of a continued deference to temporal priority.

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61. p. 313.

62. p. 317.

63. p. 319.

64. p. 351.

"Being and Time," for example, analyzes a particular being and ends with the proposition that "Temporality" is the Being of Dasein. Now, the "logical" conclusion that must be drawn from this would turn ontology over to a "yet more primordial" discipline, say, "temporology," or some such. But the point is this: that this way has led to absolute mystery, Nothing, dis-essence, an ever- (and therefore, never) future. Time is not an essence, a something. It is Mystery, dis-essence, Nothing. Rather, we must always turn around and go back to our preoccupation with beings (as in these studies), and attempt to relate to them in such a way that Being abides in them. In this way, Time enters as a constant factor and has its way. Those who see this, realize that metaphysics is the "basic" discipline of "historical" man. There is no way to deal with Time as an "object," as an entity, in a way appropriately primordial enough and therefore truly temporal. The eternal, ever-future has been our name given to the Mystery, the Holy, the Nothing, these latter being Heidegger's names. All suggest "the absent One" who never appears "as such," yet is nearer than hands and feet, closer than breathing. Time pervades all as the horizon of all possible unity and discloses to Da-sein that it, as well as all other beings, is incomplete, and will find fulfillment, or wholeness, or unity, only when concerned with the basic question, i.e., when concerned with the "place" (Da-) where Time and Being commingle: in Da-sein. We cannot know pure Time, pure Truth, pure Mystery, pure Being;



these are Nothing when sought for themselves. They are revealed only when the "basic" question is put, a question which is ruler-over by Time: "What is what-is?" This "reversal," this "turning away" from the Mystery which is pure Time, is a returning to beings, and brings Heidegger's analysis "full circle." The way in "Being and Time" let toward Time. The proposed third part of the "First Half," to be entitled "Time and Being" would have, as in this essay, shown that this way is a blind alley; it ends in absolute Mystery. We are forced to forego the anticipated pleasure of getting hold of pure transcendence, freedom, truth, the Absolute; for, they turn out to be Nothing. This is why Heidegger contends that his thought brings to end the whole history of Western thought, culminating in Hegel and Nietzsche.<sup>65</sup> We must return to beings and to history, and do so "historically."

This "reversal," this turning back and away from absolute Mystery, and towards the tension that abides in the Da-sein, this resolve for "historical" responsibility is succinctly summed up as "gazing out of error into the mystery" and asking "the only question that exists: What is that which is as such in totality?"

"This question mediates the essentially confusing and, because of its multifarious aspects, still unmastered question regarding das Sein des Seienden. The thought of Being, which is the original source of all such questioning, has, ever since Plato's day, been conceived as 'Philosophy,' later acquiring the title of 'Metaphysics.'"<sup>66</sup>

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65. p. 323.

66. p. 319f.

In the fact that this basic question is still "unmastered," there is expressed a fundamental humility, an attitude of openness towards the mystery. It is, as it were, a confession of error, an admission that freedom and transcendence are still future. This philosopher is not the arbiter of truth, but acknowledges, rather, that the essence of truth is yet to be revealed. That is, it has not become "historical" in the sense of having been formulated propositionally, but nevertheless has been revealed in the mystery that adheres fundamentally to the Da-sein who, during his lifetime, abides, relative to all that "is," in the future. Heidegger's claim to "surpass" (Überwindung) metaphysics is grounded in this reversal in approach: a turning away from an attempt to grasp the mystery as though it had revealed itself "as such" quite apart from what-is, and a turning towards historical man as the scene, as it were, of the revelation of mystery. In-sisting ex-sistent Da-sein is the only "place" where the mystery is immanent. Except philosophy, i.e., metaphysics, takes as its "subject" Da-sein,<sup>it</sup> fails altogether to look in the right "place." But let the author speak for himself...

"The knowledge arrived at in the lecture comes to flower in the essential experience that only in and from Da-sein, as a thing to which we have entry, can any approximation to the truth of Being evolve for historical man. Not only is every sort of subjectivity (of man regarded as a subject) abandoned, as was already the case in 'Sein und Zeit,' and the truth of Being pursued as the 'ground' of a fundamentally new attitude to history, but an effort is made in the course of the lecture to think in terms of this other 'ground,' i.e., Da-sein.

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67. From the appended "Note," p. 323.



The essay's last section is given over to a discussion of the problem of truth and philosophy. In it Heidegger defends philosophy's historic preoccupation with Being, but only insofar as Being is understood from the perspective of this new approach.

"In this thought of Being, man's freedom for ex-sistence (a freedom which is the basis of all history) is put into words. This is not to be understood as the 'expression' of an 'opinion'; rather this word (Being) is the well-preserved structure of the truth of das Seinde im Ganzen."68

Nor does it matter "how many have ears for this word," for, "those who hear it determine man's place in history."69 That is to say, "common sense" (Sophism) will no doubt reject out of hand the "way" of thought represented here, but such will not deter those whose respect is commanded rather by "the horizon of all possible unity," i.e., "the well-preserved structure of the truth of beings in totality." The "non-problematical" approach to things, both "other" and the "self," sees them as already manifest and not at all infected, as it were, with the problematical "in totality." But, though such a view be the majority view, the courageous will take up the challenge to approximate more truly that ultimate unity which abides in the distance.

Because, however, "the complete essence of truth also includes its dis-essence," the error that is dissimulation will constrain philosophy to walk softly, to have the "calm dignity of gentleness, not denying the dissimulation." But at the same

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68. p. 320.

69. p. 320.

time, its "open resolve" to press on towards the mark, will combine with gentleness in a tension that will "force its essence whole and intact into the open, into our understanding, and so to reveal its own truth."<sup>70</sup>

What this means for philosophy is this: that it can admit of no "outside" authority.<sup>71</sup> That is to say, all authority has already been invested in in-sisting ex-sistent Da-sein in virtue of its proximity to Sein. Being has to be thought, always has been, and ever will be. "But Being is not a product of thinking. It is more likely that essential thinking is an occurrence of Being."<sup>72</sup> Authority is "there" in the Da-sein; it is a matter of "letting" it "occur" in the "historical" questioning of das Seiende im Ganzen. In other words, philosophy, as truly "historical" thinking, is neither held down in servitude to history as "tradition," nor frightened by the majesty of the mystery, but sees, rather, that the mystery abides in Da-sein, and therefore takes confidence and courage therein.

Now at the end of his enquiry, Heidegger reviews the steps that it has taken:

"By tracing the inner possibility of a statement's 'rightness' back to the ex-sistent freedom of 'letting-be' as the very basis of that statement, and by suggesting that the essential core of this basis is to be found in dissimulation and error, we may have indicated that the nature of truth is not just the empty, 'general' character of some 'abstract' commonplace, but is something that is unique in history (itself unique): the self-dissimulation of the revelation of the 'meaning' of what we call 'Being'..."<sup>73</sup>

70. p. 320f.

71. p. 321.

72. From the "Postscript" to "What is Metaphysics?" p. 355f.

73. p. 322.



The Da-sein is what is "unique in history," the unity that is the tension that abides in both identity and difference. As such, it dissimulates (conceals) the revelation of the truth, i.e., meaning, of Being, while at the same time revealing it in a way that is diametrically opposed to "history" with its representation and formulation of "historical" truths. That we may the better see something of the nature of this dialectical tension that abides in the Da-sein, let us now venture into Heidegger's discussion of Identity and Difference.

## Chapter VII

## 1. "The Principle of Identity"

This lecture, as Heidegger puts it in the Forward to Identität und Differenz, "looks both forward and backward."<sup>1</sup> It looks forward into the realm of objectification in the sense discussed at length in the "Kantbook," that is, into the realm of beings as such, as existing factually, i.e., historically. And it looks backward "into the realm of the essential advent of metaphysics, the disposition of which is determined through the 'Difference.'"<sup>2</sup> Now, without for the moment going into the complexities of these "realms," we nevertheless want to understand these graphic terms "forward" and "backward." We have seen how Heidegger has continually pushed by means of a "temporal" analytic the bounds of ontology further and further back until it spills over, as it were, into the "non-ground," into the Nothing. That is, he has pressed beyond the ontical future into the "ever-future." But since this latter never comes to be as such, it cannot be the basis upon which to found that which does come to be, i.e., historical beings. Hence, in the essay just studied we have the "reversal"; he turns away from the Nothing and faces what-is. Our stance, then, is face-forward towards the beings which exist, however historically, i.e., relatively. But, as we shall see, Heidegger does not ignore this Nothing which he has won at great cost. The "step backwards" will be a movement in thought which steps back and out of the strictly

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1. Identität und Differenz. Gunther Neske, Pfullingen, 1957, p. 10; hereafter in this chapter referred to simply by page number.

2. p. 10.



historical, and into the realm of the future, i.e., into existence, into that orientation which views the totality of history - up to that very moment - as a unity. For, it is only in this position outside of, i.e., future to and objective to, all that "is" that affords insight into the "arrival" of Beings as beings, as "there."

These two movements, then, forward and backward, we see as constituting the Difference: the dialectic in thought which accords with that temporal Difference given in the experience of selfhood as the continuing transition from the future to presence: a flux which endures despite any effort on our part to stay or otherwise alter it by means of thought or technical devices. Our course will be, as it has been all along, to highlight as far as practicable the temporal overtones of Heidegger's ontology with an eye to appreciating his constant concern for Time's prerogative.

"The principle of Identity, according to a familiar formula, reads:  $A = A$ . It is the highest law of thought."<sup>3</sup> But should we dwell upon the content at either side of the sign of equality ( $=$ ), we will find that, in time, it will change into something different. For example, suppose the A to represent a pen. A pen in our great-grandfather's day was probably a quill. Today it is either a "ball-point" or a "fountain" pen. In time the content of A will change. To focus upon the "content" of this formula is to focus upon historical flux. Our task, then, is

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3. p. 13.

to concentrate upon the sign between the A's, upon that which endures.

This formula for Identity,  $A = A$ , is not intended, however, to assert equality between different A's.<sup>4</sup> It is not trying to say that one pen is equal to another. Rather, it asserts something about the "A" itself - and with this common usage of the word "itself," we immediately plunge into the principle of Identity. The principle has to do with selfhood and the ambiguity therein.<sup>5</sup> This ambiguity is most common, not with objects like pens - for we rarely think of them nowadays as "selves" - but with persons. It is common to hear someone say of another, "He is not himself today." This infers that normally he is himself. Hence, the better formula for Identity would be "A is A."<sup>6</sup>

But "A is A" is a tautology. Precisely. Such however only bears witness to the appropriateness of the "is." The formula appears to be tautological because of a double reflection. The principle of Identity is so automatic in its claim upon us that this formula, when seen to be "tautological," evokes in us reflection upon both the "A" and the "is" with the result that it says in effect: A itself is A itself: a tautology.

The most concise formula for Identity, precisely because we know its claim so intimately and automatically, would be simply "A." The expanded, so-called tautological form, however, discloses the essential problematic involved in Identity, namely, Identity signifies of a "connection," a "mediation," a "synthesis."<sup>7</sup>

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4. p. 14.

5. p. 14.

6. p. 15.

7. p. 15.



It speaks of a relation within unity itself.

"It comes to this, that Identity throughout the history of Western thought appears always in the character of unity. But this unity is by no means the insipid vacuity of that which is in itself relationless and continuously persists in monotony."<sup>8</sup>

Rather, it is a unity which, within itself, vibrates with an inner-relativity, a movement, a tension, between the two poles of Being and being, future and presence. We may anticipate, then, that the formula for the principle of Identity, A is A, is equivalent to the problematic ontological formula: Being is being. In this lecture we are intent upon disclosing just how this is so. In the essay to follow, we will concentrate upon how it is not so, i.e., upon the "Difference."

Now, is not this thought, that there is "a relation within unity itself," revolutionary? Does it not sound strange? Heidegger maintains, however, that it is implicit in the very earliest of Western thought, but that two thousand years have been required for its "accomodation."<sup>9</sup> And he sees German Idealism to be the maturing of that accomodation. Since Leibniz, Kant, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, it is "forbidden" to represent the unity of Identity as mere monotony, to ignore the mediation holding sway in unity.<sup>10</sup> "Where such happens, Identity is represented only abstractly."

"Identity's claim concerns the Being of beings. Where, however, the Being of beings comes to its earliest expression in Western thought -- in Parmenides -- Identity speaks to us."

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8. p. 15.

9. p. 15.

10. p. 16.

in an extreme sense. One of Parmenides' statements reads:  
The self is both thinking and Being."<sup>11</sup>

That is to say, thought and Being are identical with selfhood. Such a notion, Heidegger maintains, is quite foreign to traditional metaphysical doctrine which asserts that Identity belongs to Being.<sup>12</sup> Parmenides seems to be saying that Being belongs to an Identity. But what does τὸ αὐτό, the self, mean in Parmenides? Parmenides does not answer. All we can say is that:

"In the springtime of thought, long before there was a 'Principle of Identity,' Identity itself spoke, and indeed decreed: Thought and Being belong together, both in the self [as constituting it] and out of it [as its expression]."<sup>13</sup>

Now, Heidegger takes this expression "belonging together" as an apt explication of τὸ αὐτό, and defines selfhood as "belonging-togetherness" (Zusammengehörigkeit).<sup>14</sup> This comes very close to satisfying the requirements of the traditional doctrine, viz., Being and beings belong together in an Identity. But this is not what Parmenides claims. He says that "Being belongs - with thought - to the self."<sup>15</sup> If Being is determined in an Identity as a tension within Identity, but traditional metaphysics conceives Identity as a tension in Being, then, we cannot obtain help from traditional metaphysics as to what Parmenides intended.<sup>16</sup> His is a tension in the Self, a tension involving both Being and Thinking. No doubt we are to anticipate in this lecture the explication of what Heidegger suggested earlier, that essential thinking as an activity of the self, "is an occurrence of Being."<sup>17</sup>

11. p. 175.

12. p. 18.

13. p. 18.

14. p. 18. The reader will recall that this term was earlier rendered "integrity," i.e., unity.

15. p. 19.

16. p. 19.

17. p. 356, Existence and Being



If we are to consider "belonging-together" as a fitting explication of ἡ σύνεσις, the Self, we can readily grasp the usual interpretation: one that stresses the "together." Here the sense is of an initial unity (together) and the "belonging-" merely qualifies this unity by suggesting an arrangement and classification of the elements within this totality, much as those, say, of a system which is governed by a mediating synthesis. "Philosophy represents this unity as nexus and connexio, as the necessary connection of one element with another."<sup>18</sup>

Heidegger, however, puts the stress on the "belonging-" as determinative for the "-together." That is to say, the "union" is discovered in consequence of the peculiar relation that exists between the elements involved. Or, put another way, the relation is prior to any unity that may be seen to inhere.<sup>19</sup> Parmenides has already given us a clue as to what is intended here: Being and Thinking belong together because they first accord with each other; they are the self-same: ἡ αὐτή, i.e., the self.

If man can be characterized as "the thinking essence, who is open to Being, is placed before it, remains related to it, and thus answers, i.e., accords, to it," then man is "this relation of accord, and he is only this."<sup>20</sup> And he is this in virtue of the tenacity of this relation: Man is "more than suited" (ὑbereignet) to Being.

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18. p. 20.

19. p. 20.

20. p. 22.

If we consider Being in "its original sense as presence" (Anwesen), then we can say for a certainty that man becomes present as "presence" "neither approximately so, nor as an exception to the rule." But Being, as "presence," endures only to the extent that man is approached (an-geht) by Being and accepts its claim.<sup>21</sup> We infer here an element of radical decision on the part of man to accept Being. If he does, he knows, or experiences, "presence." If he does not, he is deprived of it. "Such presence requires the openness of a clearing and thus remains in virtue of this need (Brauchen), assigned to humanity (Menschenwesen)."<sup>22</sup>

Now, "this is by no means to assert that Being first comes to be fixed only through man." Yet it should be clear that "man and Being are assigned to each other and belong to each other," and that out of this relation has come the whole history of philosophy and its metaphysical conceptions.<sup>23</sup> To be sure, other beings besides man enjoy presence and therefore are related to Being. But only man is characterized by history, a history in which Being is possibly the prime concern.

Putting the matter in this way, however, still does not provide an adequate understanding of this relation as belonging together. The only way open to a sure grasp requires that we forsake the "support of representing thought," i.e., objectifying thought. We must "wean" ourselves away from such by means of a leap or vault which breaks the prevailing continuity.

21. p. 23.

22. p. 23.

23. p. 23.



"It leaps off, or out of the way of, the usual representation of man as the animal rationale, which in modern times has become the subject of its objects. The leap away at the same time splits off from Being, which since early Western thought has been explained as the ground wherein being is grounded as a being."<sup>24</sup>

This means that the proposed leap vaults beyond Being into the Non-ground (Abgrund) so long as we do this in terms of metaphysical thought. That is to say, we "think" our way over the "bridgeless precipice" and gain entry to that primordial realm in which man and Being are first "assigned" to each other.<sup>25</sup> We take this to be another suggestion that we thoughtfully reverse the flow of time and gain entry to the future, for it is there that the experience of thought is first "tuned" for its primordial harmony with Being. Yet, this is where we already are when existing authentically.<sup>26</sup> And this, despite the prevailing attitude in the world today with its scientific sophistication.

Notwithstanding the claims of modern technology, man and all beings, Nature and History, stand under the claim of Being, and react against the vacuous unity of beings with Being -- as though there were no abiding tension between them, but only empty monotony. Heidegger coins a term for this claim which Being makes upon man. He calls it the Ge-Stell. Quite literally it is the "placing together" of man and Being in their mutual difference. For technology, Being is no problem: Being is the beings which "are," pure and simple. It is interesting to note that the German noun Gestell can mean, among other

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24. p. 24.

25. p. 24.

26. p. 25 and also B&T.

things, "authority."<sup>27</sup> Heidegger's reaction against the authority of modern "calculative" thought is especially evident in this lecture. So that in his term Ge-Stell there abides a higher authority, if you will: that which is the aggregate of all possible individual claims which Being makes upon all beings. It is the total challenge which Being makes upon beings, not merely to be, but to be in time. They are placed together in a vibrating mutual reciprocity: in Ge-Stell.<sup>28</sup>

In the same context, Heidegger uses the German equivalent to the English "constellation," a word which originally connected the relation (con-) of stars or planets to each other, and which still retains the idea of grouping together. His Ge-Stell is the constellation of Man and Being.

It goes without saying that this Ge-Stell does not itself approach man in its challenge, but is splintered into tens of thousands of fragments, each constituting a lesser challenge in its own right, and helping, with the others, to "tune" man in moods. Thus is this over-all challenge by Being "strange" to man. But this does not mean that Man and Being are ill-suited (vereignet). Quite the contrary. Yet there is a legitimate sense in which they can be said not to suit each other. Hence the hyphen in Ge-Stell. There is, despite their suiting, an essential "difference" between them. But our purpose in this lecture is to elucidate how they suit one another.

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27. Cassell's German and English Dictionary, Cassell & Co., London,

28. p. 27f.



The character of the claim of Being upon Man as "belonging" together is best seen in the obvious fact that they enter into a union in which they are indissolubly united. This union we call an "event" (Ereignis).<sup>29</sup> Man and Being are historical, i.e., eventful. But as a key word here, "event" is as difficult to define "as the Greek λογος and the Chinese Tao." "The word 'event' here intends no more than what we nearly always mean by 'happening' (Geschehnis), 'occurrence' (Vorkommnis)."<sup>30</sup>

Now, the first thing we notice about the word "event" is that it speaks "singulare tantum." That is, an "event" is a closed entity, a totality, and wholly unique. Once an event is said to have "occurred," it is complete with a beginning and an end, and is ready to be ascribed as such to history. For example, we see the second World War as an event; so also the history of modern technology.

But Ge-Stell does not especially connote particular events as links in the chain of history. Rather, it contains within it the possibility of the most authentic and original of all events: the event. This primal event Heidegger terms "e-vent" (Er-eignis) so as to differentiate it from the infinite number of so-called historical events. For Heidegger, this primal "e-vent" is "Thinking" (Denken). And he arrives at this conclusion in virtue of "essential thinking": thought which thinks the essence of the domination of technical calculation, thought

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29. p. 28.

30. p. 29.

which thinks the essence of metaphysics, thought which takes the daring leap across the "bridgeless" abyss and thinks the belonging together of Being and Man in their coming together in "e-vent."<sup>31</sup>

"The e-vent is the vibrating (schwincende) realm through which Man and Being reach each other in their essence, thereby winning their being (Wesendes) and losing those determinations loaned them by metaphysics."<sup>32</sup>

We are speaking now of the primordial "e-vent," of that which is the crystallization of thought, as it were, from out of an amorphous (sich schwebenden) jumble of words constituting language. And in the moment that these words come to constitute thought, "there" is thinking; "there" is the coming together of Being and Man; "there" is "presence"; "there" is the self in selfhood.<sup>33</sup> But...

"Language is the most delicate, the most accidental of all behavioral activities (verhaltende schwingung) in the amorphous structure of events."<sup>34</sup>

Thinking uses the raw material of language, i.e., words, to erect thought which, when it achieves form, the primal e-vent is constituted and from it all events derive.<sup>35</sup> All of history owes its entire structure to those thoughts which, unseen and often unarticulated, nevertheless are the ground, as it were, of all human activity. Do we misconstrue Heidegger here if we include within the purview of e-vent those fuzzy and inarticulate thoughts which occur, say, in infants when, from the

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31. p. 29f.

32. p. 30.

33. p. 30.

34. p. 30.

35. p. 30.



sharp spanking they receive at birth, they gasp for air and start to cry? Surely by "language" is meant more than the unabridged dictionary and the classical grammars.

But the breadth of this horizon of thought does not necessarily include "essential thought", i.e., the thought of the belonging-together of Being and Man, which relation is perceived only when thought is "metaphysical," i.e., over-leaps the bounds imposed by traditional thought and vaults into the realm which is prior to the actual coming together of these two in the constitution both of e-vent and event. "Essential" thinking thinks "metaphysically"; it reverses the flow of time, so to speak, in order that it may grasp something of the abiding mystery which energizes and sets to vibrating this realm of the "beyond" which continually renews and thereby protects from the abyss of history by providing the perspective which "historians" require: that Archimedean point outside all events which is in ex-sistence, or e-vent.

A problem arises, however, in this: that language, according to one view of it, is very well suited to events, but is wholly unsuited to e-vent. Since e-vent is a "vibrating" clearing in which relation holds sway continuously, thought, when once it crystallizes out of this openness and into linguistic form, becomes an event. According to this view, history

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has no future; events are bald facts, pure and simple, fully revealed and complete. They are merely "historical," the "objects" with which the "scientific" historian plays, and from which he constructs his rendering of the past. But if Man has a future, and because of this is historical in the positive sense of abiding for a time in the future, in ex-sistence, then only e-vent suits him, and events of this static genus do not. They are alien to him -- even those which he himself has effected.

A static view of language is wooden. That is, it sees it from the standpoint of a grammarian or lexicographer to the extent that these latter consider language to be fixed in particular forms. Language which is "alive," however, and takes its cue from e-vent, is constantly changing, is in continuous flux. Such is Heidegger's understanding of language when he says that it "suits our essence." Indeed, he says, "To the extent that our essence is ill-suited to language, we dwell in events"<sup>36</sup> and not at all in the e-vent. Language is truly the correlate of e-vent only when, like its author, it abides in the flux of open relation.

At this point in the argument Heidegger poses an "unavoidable" question: "What has event to do with Identity?" and he answers, "Nothing." Yet, Identity has everything to do with event.<sup>37</sup> To explain this, he retraces a few steps. He has

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36. p. 30.

37. p. 30.



already said that "event is ill-suited to man and Being in their real union,"<sup>38</sup> i.e., in e-vent. But there are "embarrassing flashes of event" in the Ge-Stell. For, it sees the modern technical world, for example, as event, as a fixed reality only too plain to see. It would see the two World Wars as totally enclosed entities as obvious as the nose on one's face. When we see events so clearly and so authoritatively, we have forsaken the realm of vibrating oscillation, the realm of e-vent, and dwell now as "historians" in the worst sense.

The only alternative to this position is one which is not yet fully external to the events of history, but rather is close to the origin of all events. There we see how all events are still in flux in virtue of their genesis in e-vent. The dictum of Parmenides, namely, that "the Self is both Thinking and Being," suggests that Thinking and Being belong together in an Identity, i.e., to the Self. But where the history of metaphysics has posited the tension of Identity in Being, we now see that the tension of Identity is in e-vent, in that realm in which both Thinking and Being "occur originally." That is to say, Being comes into being, and Thinking comes into thought, i.e., into language, as e-vent. They "occur" simultaneously. But from the "scientific" point of view, precise definition does not characterize e-vent, but only event. And this is precisely the point! All so-called "events," when seen relative to their origin in e-vent, retain something of the mystery

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38. p. 31.

which inheres in the Abgrund, in the amorphous flux of primordial e-vent, and are therefore never released whole and complete, finished and served up as over and done with. All of history is problematical in virtue of its origin in that realm which is "disconnected" from the static, sterile, unity of traditional metaphysics and technological calculation.

Identity, then, does have "everything to do with event" simply because Identity itself is e-vent and not event. If events are said to "come to be" in time, then the chain of events which we call history must be seen to be the product, if you will, of Time, and must retain something of Time's "original" character. This means that the a priori, i.e., the future, adheres to all that "happens." The coming together of Being and being, and of Thinking and thought, in an Identity is made possible by that which will always be mysterious and utterly transcendent: the ever-future, the eternal. We may "speak," as Heidegger does, of event as "letting-belong-together" (Zusammengehören-lassen)<sup>39</sup> and so it is: it is an event of essential thinking. Such thought, however, merely "thinks" the reverse of Time by thoughtfully crossing the "bridgeless" abyss from out of Being and into the Abgrund where, in the open clearing of relation, in the horizon of all possible unity, Identity abides in e-vent. That thought can do this while we, for our part, stay here on this side of the abyss in existence -- as beings -- is why

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39. p. 31.



Heidegger suggests that Thought is the "House of Being."<sup>40a</sup> For, Thought, conceived in this way, is "made" of Time, as it were. Essential thinking "uses its Time" all the while it thinks of that which makes thought possible.<sup>41a</sup> While using Time as it is "given," it thinks the reversal of that sequential flow (as in logic) and moves back to its origin, and so discovers both its finitude and infinitude, i.e., Truth. For, thought is finite in the sense of event; any existing person can do as he wills with another's thought. He can misrepresent, misinterpret, even ignore it altogether. But when thought is seen as e-vent, then it always retains for its reader an aura of mystery in the sense that it cannot be sized-up without question and disposed of as so much refuse. All thought thus becomes holy to the degree that it bears witness to primordial Time - just by being what it is. But that which speaks directly of Time by acknowledging its sovereignty can be none other than sacred.

The scriptures speak of "Him" who from the beginning (of time) maintains a "sleepless" vigil, who dwells "high and lifted up" (in the future?), whose kingdom is everlasting, eternal. He is said to "love" all men, indeed, all that he has "created"; he "comes" and dwells among men as the Holy "Spirit." This Spirit "blows whither it will," nor can anyone say, "Lo, here it is, or there it is." This Spirit knows "when" the sparrow falls, and "numbers" the hairs of one's head. He "visits" the down-trodden, homeless, hungry, naked, etc.: the "least" of his brethren. Though Time waits for neither man nor beast, nor anything

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<sup>40a</sup>. p. 32; See also the "Humanismusbriefe."

<sup>41a</sup>. p. 36.

under the sun, yet each "abides" for a time because of Time's initial visitation (in e-vent?) and its abiding "presence." And each endures until such time as it is called back to Time's own eternity, and ceases to "be" any longer. But even then - that is, after it has ceased to "be" any longer - it is not the property of objectifying historians, to be served up as wholly seen as from the Archemedian point in the eschaton. For, so long as men themselves abide in "presence," Time is still sovereign and rules over its children. Therefore, all would-be events, including ex-sistence, are hyphenated in the sense that discontinuity, or the vibrating, coming-to-be of Being into being and of Thinking into thought, demands of events and of all beings that they be appreciated as e-vents and be-ings: finite creatures of Time.

Have we strayed too far from Heidegger's intent? Have we thrown up bridges and crossed over out of his thought and into our own?

Heidegger says that "the essence of Identity has the quality of e-vent" and that this investigation into the "Principle of Identity," had it found something "durable" (Haltbares), could never have had the sense of a "leap" or "vault" (Sprungh), or movement, which is so necessary.<sup>40</sup> Hence, the thought of this lecture has moved from a static propositional form to a vibrating, dynamic, oscillation "which weans thought away from Being as the ground of beings, and vaults into the non-ground...

"Yet this non-ground is neither the vacuous Nothing nor an ominous chaos, but the e-vent. In e-vent vibrates that

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40. p. 31f.



essence which speaks as language and has been termed the House of Being. The movement [Principle] of Identity now says: If indeed the belonging-together of Man and Being is ever to reach the essential light of event, then the essence of Identity necessarily requires a discontinuity (Ein Sprung).<sup>41</sup>

Thus has thinking "changed" from positive assertion to an oscillating movement which looks "forward" to the present and "backward" to the "constellation of Man and Being." That is, it "looks out of e-vent." From this vantage point, the way is clear "to experience more originally the whole of the modern technical world, Nature, and History - all prior to their being"<sup>42</sup> - as from the foundation of the world.

"Thought has required more than two thousand years in order only to grasp the simple relation which is the mediation within Identity. Dare we suggest that the thinking entry into the essential advent of Identity is to be accomplished in a day? Precisely because this entry requires a discontinuity, it uses its Time, the Time of thinking, which is opposed to every sort of calculation which today tugs in every way upon our thought."<sup>43</sup>

But, however we may seek to think, we can do so only within the latitude suggested by tradition. Once, however, we have focused upon "historical" thought, we may be freed to think what has yet to be thought - providing our thought is not calculative or of the planning variety.<sup>44</sup>

We fail to sense indiscretion in our elaboration above of Heidegger's thought unless it is our wanton insistence upon interpolating Time where it seems obviously to fit. If we dishonor his desire to be an "ontologist," it is only because we have sensed from the start that he cares more for Time and its

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41. p. 32.

42. p. 33.

43. p. 34.

44. p. 34.

mediatorial effect on all beings, especially "events," than for these "beings" themselves. He has rather consistently disavowed any role as a "poet," and therefore hesitates to "name" the Holy. Yet, as we are about to see, he well recognizes how his thought relates to Theology in the "onto-theo-logical disposition of metaphysics," when this latter is truly "meta-" in the sense of being intent only upon the a priori.

But before we leave this important lecture, it is essential to interpolate some more. The theme of this lecture has been Identity, and Heidegger has wisely chosen to contrast "belonging" with "together" in this rather fortuitous "definition" of Identity. But he has failed in our estimation to furnish us with an altogether conclusive argument even though its "logic", i.e., its futureward progression, is entirely consistent, and he ends with the "vibrating" coming-to-be of Identity in e-vent. The rightness of his insight derives from his intuitive grasp of the indissoluble unity of Time as Time. To be sure, man senses, as it were, or experiences, "coming-into-being" as the coming together of the future with the present (already "given") moment in a continuity. And Heidegger's approach in this lecture is thoughtfully to break away from this continuity, and to leap into the future so as to arrive at that moment which is just prior to this coming-together, so that we can appreciate the action here as prior to our own being. This is all well and good, but the decisive argument lies in suggesting the "temporality of this activity. Time is Time, whether it be future, present, or past. Thus, belonging-together simply specifies that the re-



lation here is precisely that of "original" Identity, that of Time itself. The Identity here is the Identity of Time as it is present both in the future prior to its becoming present, and in the present prior to its becoming past. Hence, the Identity in future, present, and past; and hence, the reasoning that history cannot be seen whole and complete in itself, a "thing" to be sized-up and otherwise assessed as fully revealed.

Identity, then, can be understood as the self-identity of Time and the model, as it were, for all Identity. The "formula for Identity, A is A, when transposed into temporal terms reads: Time is Time. As observed above, this is not a tautology but a graphic exposition of the relation which abides in unity, i.e., Identity. The relation we have cited by means of the step backwards into the realm of e-vent is the relation of Time with itself. There is no other Time but that which is becoming in e-vent. Our experience of e-vent is of unity in Identity. No other Time is open to experience, nor has it ever been. Every man who has ever lived has experienced "this" Time; he has experienced only "this" oscillation in unity, in Identity. But because Thought can think this "relation," it can put one end one together and get two - with the result that we get a chain of Identities, a chain of unities, of moments, of events which we call history. Whereas, the Time of Identity is now, and has always been this now for every generation, Thought cannot comprehend "relation" as a unity; always it has two poles.

Nevertheless, the confluence of Time with itself in "presence," in the now, is Identity; this is relation in unity; this is the self-identity of Time; this is the abiding e-vent which protects all so-called events from willful destruction by "subsequent" comers in Time. Time is Time, then, now, and always.

What is different about different times in history is not the enduring self-identity of Time, but man's ever-changing grasp of beings, of things, as they occur in time, i.e., in history. Because of "things," we get the feeling of changing times. But is it not the "unchanging" continuity of the "self" which makes possible, indeed necessary, a continuing coming-to-be and falling-away of the "things" which are apprehended in time - lest things become the truly durable? But for the sameness of the "self" in the self-identity of Time, we could not relate to ourselves, to each other either as contemporaries or as "historical" figures. Our grasp of "things" has changed, but has our basic experience of the be-coming of Time in existence?

This leads us to observe that the Identity of Being with being is fundamentally that of the Identity of Time with itself. Being has throughout Heidegger's ontology been "future," whereas "being" has been "historical" or past - already "given." Are we not to see now that the relation between Being and being is that which is present in the oscillating Identity of Time with itself in the Now? And that the long history of metaphysics



has been struggling, as has Heidegger himself, with the "Difference" which is at the same time an Identity? In the Forward to Identität und Differenz Heidegger says:

"The extent to which Difference derives from the essence of Identity the reader must himself discover upon hearing the harmony [accord] which holds sway between event and decision. Proofs are not permitted in this realm, but many things are [nevertheless] indicated."<sup>45</sup>

Proofs may not be permitted, but the argument certainly is enhanced when Time, as such, is interpolated as the model upon which Identity and Difference is based.

We might explain this in different terms. The "scientific" disciplines have long distinguished between Time and Space. But the "scientific" notion of time is derived from spatial phenomena, i.e., "movement." Despite the fact that physicists are not yet agreed whether light, for example, is to be understood as "particular" or as "waves," its speed has been calculated to be about 186,000 miles per second. As we said earlier, scientists are now intent upon measuring the "second" more precisely. But if Identity is a function of Time, and Time is a relation within unity, is it possible to "measure" the "interval" in this essential unity? That is to say, is it possible to use "moving" spatial phenomena as standards by which to assess or otherwise deduce Time when Time has all along been the standard by which spatial phenomena have been determined? Time and space may "appear" to be irrevocably locked in a mutually reciprocal unity, but our approach all along has

been "materialistic." All "material," i.e., spatial phenomena, exists in time. Nor is it possible to encounter anything that does not so exist. Spatial phenomena are equivalent to "being," and Time is equivalent to Being. Hence, the problem posed by the "Space-time Continuum" is that of Identity. It is that of ontology when ontology is, as Heidegger's is, preoccupied, perhaps unconsciously, or quite despite every conscious effort to avoid it, with Time. Whoever is concerned with beings should also be concerned with Being because the Difference between them is temporal. Time is unavoidable. To think beings apart from Time is to think "unhistorically" - as though "relativity" were not a fact to be reckoned with.

But most conclusive of all of this is the fact that the problem of Identity, whether it be of man or molecule, is always at the same time the problem of Time in its self-identity, in its relation of unity. For, if unity is a relation, then we have the case of one plus one being one - and not two. That we always get two means that the whole of history with its sub-histories of science, metaphysics, etc., is based on an empty monotony, whereas, our model for unity is a relation, viz., Identity in Difference. It comes to this: that every "event" in history is therefore misrepresented; history is problematic in the highest. We simply cannot under-stand (in the sense of "objectifying" thought) Time. Every relation we comprehend always has at least two unitaries within it, so that "relation" is not unity at its simplest, but is instead



a totality, a sum of unities. But if Time is Difference in Identity, a relation within the least common denominator of unity, then, we have a mystery. And we have it here, right now, in identity, in "presence," in the experience of Selfhood.

This means that "metaphysical" logic - that "logic" which moves future-ward in order to ground all that is - simply moves toward one temporal pole, e.g., the future, and away from the other which is "given" and from which we "step back." Where is Identity here? Heidegger's thought thinks a dialectic in unity, but it is also a Difference, and, as he said, it is up to us to recognize the "accord" between them. They are in accord, the same, the Self, Identity.

All that remains is to see that the three dimensions of time: past, present, and future, are "identical" because all three are Time. This is not to suggest that the unity of Identity is split three ways, but, rather, that the coming-to-be of the future in its proximity with presence is a relation of unity in Identity; and the relation of the present with the past is a relation of unity in Identity. This means that we have two comings-to-be: two lines of separation, as it were, shown graphically like this: past/present/future. Both of the "lines" are vibrating e-vents, and because they are "temporal" are therefore identical. They are the same area of open relation in which Time merges with Time and thus "occurs." Quantitatively, we have a trinitarian form and a binary one, both of

which are identical because they are temporal. Does this not suggest in temporal terms a "Trinity" and an "incarnation" (in the sense of "two in one"), both being expressions of one "unity"? Nowhere else - that is to say, in no spatial phenomena is this peculiarity observable. For, with purely spatial phenomena, unity is always empty monotony. Difference is the hallmark of "historical" events.

If we were to summarize this attempt to go Heidegger one better, and to make more specific and conclusive his argument for Identity, we would simply say that we have siezed upon the "is" between the "A's" in his "improved" formula for Identity, and spelled it out a little further. Indeed, this "is" stands for the relation which abides between the changing "A's" and therefore links them together into a "history." This oscillating relation which is Time leaves its mark on all "events" and thus keeps them yoked to the unknown future. Hence, history is a problem and must remain so so long as events shall "occur" (in e-vent). But all of this is only by way of saying that Difference arises in Identity and abides therein forever, thus bestowing both continuity and discontinuity: the mystery which is life when this latter is appreciated to be temporality pure and simple.<sup>46</sup>

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46. Cf. Part II, Chapter 6 of Being and Time



## 1. "The Onto-Theo-Logical Disposition of Metaphysics"

In the Forward to the book containing this title, Heidegger explains ~~that~~ this was the concluding discussion in a course of seminars concerning Hegel's "Science of Logic" given during the Winter Semesters of 1956-57.<sup>47</sup> As such it has a limited value for us, for we are not at the moment particularly interested in a dialogue with Hegel. Ours is with Heidegger. Therefore, we shall skip over much that has to do with Hegel and attempt to expound Heidegger's thought as it relates specifically to the above title and to its subject: Difference.

It is readily apparent that Heidegger disagrees with Hegel at certain points, and he summarizes this difference in a series of three questions: "What for each is the prime concern (Sache) of thought? What for each is the standard for a debate with the history of thought? And, What for each is the character of Dialogue?"<sup>48</sup>

Whereas for Hegel the "absolute concept" is the prime concern of thought, for Heidegger it is the "Difference as Difference."<sup>49a</sup> And where Hegel finds the standard for a debate with historical thought in the power (Kraft) and extent of previous thought insofar as it is ordered in a "dialectical-speculative development," Heidegger looks not to what has already been thought, but to what has yet to be thought, although he has always to study what so far has already been thought in order

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47. p. 9.

48. p. 42.

49a. p. 43.

that the "Difference" may come to expression. Historical thought "releases" its "reserve" power when it is approached from a vantage point continually in advance of it, i.e., from its future. Thus it can remain all that it ever was originally.<sup>49</sup>

This approach is explained in terms of the "step backwards." Whereas Hegel approaches the history of philosophy with the aim of pressing its concepts into the mold of the "absolute concept," Heidegger simply steps back from what is said "into that heretofore overlooked region out of which the essence of Truth first becomes notable."<sup>50</sup>

"Insofar as the step backwards determines the character of our dialogue with the history of Western thought, Thinking (Denken) breaks away (fuhrt ... heraus) from what had hitherto been conceived in Philosophy in a known way. It steps back before the fact (Sache) and into Being. Thus it brings what has been thought into an opposition from whence we view the whole of this history and indeed determine its source, the whereabouts of which is generally made available. In distinction to Hegel, this is not the solution of a problem already posed, but is that which throughout this history has everywhere remained unasked. ... The step back goes from the unconceived - from the Difference as such - into its conception (zu-Denkende), which latter is the veil (Vergessenheit) of Difference."<sup>51</sup>

Here we are reminded of the essay on The Essence of Truth. The picture is the same: Stepping back into the future, i.e., into the realm of Being, and therefore into the realm of what has yet to come into being in a particular form, we come upon the primordial pre-structure of all beings, and hence into the realm of the Augen, or concealment. Once, however, what has hitherto been unconceived becomes conceived, it leaves concealment, i.e., future, Being, and enters into the Difference as a

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49. p. 44f.

50. p. 45.

51. p. 46.



positive conception. When so conceived, it may or may not be the "antithesis" or "synthesis" envisioned by Hegel. It does not matter. Whatever its form, it will have become "historical," i.e., revealed, and therefore no longer the Difference as such. All that can be said of it is that it now represents the Difference - as with an antithesis or synthesis - relative to a particular historical thesis.

Heidegger's "step back" is a step into that realm which is always future to every historical thought no matter how far it be projected into the future. From this vantage point in the eternally future, from this stance in absolute stability and endurance<sup>52</sup> - the absolute "ground" for all of history however long it lasts - Heidegger views the whole of history, even searching out the origins of particular thoughts as they show themselves in preceding thought. Is this vantage point the same as the theological "end of time," the eschaton, the "place" where it is possible to gain the perspective necessary for the "last judgment"? We will see shortly that it is not.

Wherever it is, this region "of the Difference as such" makes it possible for metaphysics to be what it "is" - "meta-<sup>is a step</sup>physics." The step back<sub>is a step</sub> out of traditional metaphysics as a body of thought and into the "essence" of metaphysics.<sup>53</sup> "Essential" thinking, i.e., metaphysical thinking, moves "logically," and this means that it takes the "step back" out of history per se into that which stands in "opposition" to it. From this perspective it is possible to think, for example, the

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52. p. 47.

53. p. 47.

"essence of modern technique"<sup>54</sup> and appreciate it for what it is, namely, the abiding supposition that Being is fully revealed in beings as they are now conceived, that the Truth is revealed already and in the grasp of science, and that in this revelation we are to put our trust.

An illustration of the overall futurist attitude enjoyed by Heidegger's step back is provided when he explains that "the meaning of the step back arises in an historical return to the earliest thinkers of Western Philosophy."<sup>55</sup> When thought runs with the speed of light back several thousands of years to the very first thinkers and then, step by step, moves back towards this present day, and then on past this moment, ever moving in the same direction, it will eventually run into that future from which historical judgment can be made. But this future is not to be conceived as the ever-future but only as that future which is but one step removed from this present moment - whenever that moment might be. It is the realm of privilege enjoyed by those who are enabled to think, in virtue of "presence", the experience of Identity, of Selfhood. It is the perennial realm of the coming-into-being: that oscillating, vibrating, realm which is the "is" in the formula for Identity: A is A.

The trouble Heidegger finds with the Hegelian formulation is this: that Hegel thinks of Thought as an absolute, closed totality which is therefore no longer open to future eventualities.<sup>56</sup> Can not one say that Hegel was thinking "eschatologically" when he conceived of his absolute concept? But Heideg-

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54. p. 48.

55. p. 48 (our italics).

56. p. 49f.



ger is not content with this approach because eschatological thought assumes the closed totality of everything. Its stance is at the "end" of time and not within it. Heidegger has turned away from the Nothing, the Abgrund, and faces "forward" towards history, and settles upon the moment, if you will, which is always "Now" - the moment of Identity within which Difference abides as such. And he treats this moment "ontologically," that is, as the variable constant which is the movement of that moment of Identity which has characterized all existing beings from their first moment til their last, and which, he anticipates, will characterize Identity from here on. He is not wanting to revert to "apocalyptic" and dwell in the future totally removed from the "opposition" of history, but maintains a continuing vis-a-vis confrontation with it, always "deciding" relative to it, which "decision" (Austrag) is the authentic response of Identity. This attitude of thought is always open to the future and cannot, therefore, be a closed totality, an "absolute concept." No, Heidegger's thought is not eschatological in the same way that Hegel's is. His is the "step back," the removal from history by but one step only. His is the open realm of relation which characterizes the "living," i.e., oscillating, mediation which is "presence," as over against or in opposition to both history and the ever-future when this latter is conceived as a definite "place," e.g., at the "end" of time. This will become manifestly clear as we proceed.

We consider now why metaphysics (Heidegger's "essential" thought) is both onto-logical and theo-logical. Taking first

the "onto-," we need only observe that the Difference between Being and beings has, throughout our examination of Heidegger's thought, been a prime consideration - a Difference which he maintains still endures despite the technical proficiency of science with its presupposition that Being is fully revealed in the "beings" it "measures." Heidegger's metaphysics is ontological. Is it too mundane to argue that "by definition," viz., in terms, ontology gathers up within its compass "all that is"<sup>57</sup> (including the abstract creations of thought itself), and that in consequence "God," should he "be," and all his "angels," Heaven and Hell, the "devil," Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, Truth and falsehood, fiction and fact, are all included? Tillich says, "Philosophy<sup>and</sup> theology ask the question of being."<sup>58</sup> But, he goes on to say that while philosophy deals with the structure of being in itself; theology deals with the meaning of being for us. Not so with Heidegger's philosophy. From the start he seeks the meaning of Being<sup>59</sup> so as to bring these two historic disciplines into one. Thus, do we say that ontology must also be theology. "Metaphysics is theology because it is ontology."<sup>60</sup> It is "an expression concerning God because God comes into Philosophy." But...

"The question, How does God come into philosophy? falls back upon the question: From whence arises the onto-theological essential disposition of metaphysics? And this question assumes, therefore bids us take, the step backwards."<sup>61</sup>

But before actually taking this step backwards and attempt-

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57. p. 54.

58. Systematic Theology Vol. 1, Nisbet, London, 1953, p. 23.

59. Being and Time, p. 19.

60. p. 52.



ing to relate what happens, i.e., "occurs," "there," we deem it wise to elucidate more fully the correlations involved in the "onto-theo-logical" disposition of metaphysics. For, as Heidegger looks at Hegel's thought, we fear that our own exposition of Heidegger's thought may well have some of the characteristics which he claims are Hegelian.

He alleges that Hegel thinks Being both in its "emptiest vacuity" and in its "completed fulness." Yet he denominates his "speculative philosophy" not as onto-theology, but as the "Science of Logic."<sup>61</sup> For Hegel, the prime concern of thought is absolute "conception" (der Gedanke) in the sense of singulare tantum, a closed totality. According to traditional usage, Thought is the theme of "Logic," yet the prime concern of Thought is "beings" as such and in totality - "the movement of Being from its emptiest to its fullest development" as a completed movement. This means that Being is "grounded" in the "conception", that Thought fathoms and wholly comprehends Being. Hence the Λόγος "in the sense of the lumping together of all that is," the ἑνολογία. With Hegel, then, metaphysics is the "Science of Logic" because, from the beginning, the business (Sache) of Thought is with the Being of that "grounding ground" which lays claim to Thought under the imprimature of the Λόγος.<sup>62</sup> In a word, the correlation here between Being and the Λόγος is that suggested in John's Prologue: In the beginning was the Λόγος; and the Λόγος was with God; and the Λόγος was God.<sup>63</sup> It is that of Identity. "...all metaphysics is at bottom that ground of

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61. p. 53.

62. p. 54f.

63. John 1:1.

grounds which gives account of ground, is questioned by it, and finally brings it to expression."<sup>64</sup>

"Ontology and theology are 'logia' to the extent that they fathom the beings as such and ground them in totality. They give account of Being as the ground of beings. They discuss the Logos and in an essential sense are Logos controlled, i.e., by the logic of the Logos. Accordingly, they mean precisely Onto-Logic and Theo-Logic. Metaphysics is simply and appropriately conceived Onto-Theo-Logic."<sup>65</sup>

It should be observed that when Being is conceived to be the ground, it is also and at the same time conceived as the "first ground" - Ursprung.

"The primordial concern of Thought is represented as the first cause, the causa prima, which in turn corresponds to the grounding retrogression to the ultima ratio, the last accounting (Rechenschaft)."<sup>66</sup>

Hence the classical metaphysical denomination of God as the causa sui.

"Metaphysics must contemplate God because the object of Thought is Being and this latter comes to be construed in the several modes of grounding: as Logos, Substantia, Substance and Subject."<sup>67</sup>

Now, Heidegger is not at all content with these "traditional" modes of conceiving the "onto-theo-logical disposition" of metaphysics. They may well "touch something right" but they do not disclose how God comes into philosophy other than by way of a logical deduction. Indeed, he says that "it remains to be thought" in what way theology and ontology "belong together," and "unthought" the advent or arrival of this unity, and even "unthought" the differences which they unify. The unity of these is of such a nature, he says, that the one grounds

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64. p. 55.

65. p. 56.

66. p. 56f.

67. p. 57.



the other and vice versa. "And the distinction between the two ways of grounding which is termed the 'Difference' is still to be conceived."<sup>68</sup>

The question of the essence of metaphysics as "onto-theology" can only be discerned appropriately, i.e., in an unbiased way, when we consider the "debatable" element which persists in the formula: "the Being of beings," in which the genitive is thought as genitivus subjectivus insofar as this denomination of the genitive treats only of the Difference<sup>69</sup> - and not of the Subject-Object schema.

The trouble with trying to think the Difference is that we objectify it as a "relation" so that it becomes "something" between the poles of the relation when in fact it is nothing. The Difference is not a being, nor is it Being. It is the "difference" between them.<sup>70</sup> But then we ask, "From whence comes this 'between' into which the Difference is, as it were, introduced?"<sup>71</sup> This is a difficult question, to say the least. It is a simple matter, on the other hand, to think Difference in a vulgar way and we continually do so quite as a matter of habit - so near to us is it. But when we begin to question Thought itself and its notion of Difference, it is quite another matter. For the above question becomes: "What of Difference adheres both to Being and the beings in the formula, the Being of beings?" Being is always the Being of ... (some definite concrete entity). And conversely, all beings "belong together" to Being.<sup>72</sup>

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68. p. 58.

69. p. 59.

70. p. 60.

71. p. 60f.

72. p. 61.

In order to answer our question, we must take a step back, as it were, and by means of the "distance" afforded thereby, gain a vantage-point which is prior to the emergence of any "object." That is, from the stance afforded in the step back, thought can think in a realm which is free of any particular object as such.<sup>73</sup>

Now, in this privileged position, the formula still holds that Being is always the Being of beings, but at this point the particular being in question has not yet come into existence "as such." From here we can see that Being "comes over" or "changes into" in the sense of the "transitive" in "is."<sup>74</sup> However, Being does not "vacate its place" in "going over" into beings. Rather it is more the case that Being becomes "unconcealed" when it "comes over" and be-comes a particular being. The "is" in the formula for Identity, A is A, is equivalent to the "of" in the "ontological" formula, the Being of beings, the genitive in the latter denoting the Difference which is a "transition" (= "is") from the state of concealment in primordial and general Being to unconcealment in historical and particular beings.

"Being passes over, revealing when it comes (Kommt entbercend über), that which through this transition (Über-kommnis) first arrives as from its unvieling. But its arrival means that Being is hidden in unconcealment and endures as hidden. [When it has arrived] it is a being (Seiendes sein)."<sup>75</sup>

Putting as he does the "sein" (with a small "s") after "Seiendes," Heidegger dramatizes how Being becomes "concealed" in the innocuous forms of the verb "to be" which are always passed over

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73. p. 61f.

74. p. 62.

75. p. 62.



quite as a matter of habit in favor of what-is, i.e., beings.

"Being (in the sense of revealing transition) and the being as such (in the sense of its self-concealing arrival) occur (wesen) as distinctions within the self, as dis-tinction (Unter-Schied)."<sup>76</sup>

In this way the "between" is first conferred and retained.

It comes out of each of these, Being and the being. The "passing-over" of Being into a being and the actual "arrival" of the being are bound to each other in mutual dependence. They each produce out of themselves the other. There is here no priority either with Being or being.

The "between," i.e., the Difference, first comes to be in the action here depicted as "transition," the transition which both reveals beings as such and conceals Being as such. It is in this "transition" (Überkommenis), in this "movement" from one state to another, each "state" equally involved, and each equally responsible for the other, that we sense the "vibrating," "oscillating," "area of open relation" which has already been termed Identity and is here being disclosed as the origin of the "Difference." And to the extent that this transition is made; to the extent that the "between" which is both Identity and Difference is bestowed as such, we have judgment, decision, thinking, the "end" of the matter (in the sense of a product), the issue which comes from this action. All of these meanings are gathered up in Heidegger's single word "Austrag."

As an action of man, "decision" (which is thinking) is the effectual "projection" of a thought, the "content" of which can

to anything which has already been thought, or anything which is yet to be thought and will come into the history of thought in consequence of a thinking confrontation (Dialogue) with the history of thought when Difference is sought for its own sake. For, thinking takes time; that is, it uses its time. And when using its time in the only authentic mode, it thinks "logically," the way of which leads inevitably to the "step back," or to the origin of the Difference. Now, this says in effect that "logical" thought is led, as it were, to its origin in the "moment" - in the e-vent where dis-tinction comes to be. This is as close as we can come to siezing upon the abiding mystery which is Time. All that can be said of Time will always be cast in ontological terms, i.e., in terms of the Being of beings, "where" - and not the "place" in "where" - there is "movement," a "transition," an oscillating, vibrating realm.

Strictly speaking, Being does not exist in and of itself.<sup>77</sup> Being, as such, is nothing - no-thing. Yet, no being exists that does not "abide" in Being. Now, does not this whole "ontological" exercise come to focus in the "moment" which "is" Time even though neither of these terms ("moment" and "is") is apt? It is quite impossible to say anything about Time, or to think anything about "it" because it is not a "thing." It is Nothing. And Yet, apart from this Nothing, there "is" nothing. Every being, everything - all that has ever "been" and ever will "be" - abides in Time. And it is the consciousness of "being-in" this flux, in this oscillating Difference, in this



vibrating Identity of Selfhood (which consciousness itself takes time), that accounts for, i.e., grounds, man's concern for Time - not as Time as such, but as history, whether it be the history of natural phenomena or the history of Man. The tyranny of Time, as some are wont to put it, is the abiding mystery in which "we live and move and have our being."<sup>78</sup> It is nearer than hands and feet, nearer even than breathing.<sup>79</sup> No matter how finely we divide the "second," we will always have a "difference" as such. There will always be an "interval," a "between" which both separates (as Difference) and unites (as Identity), thereby making possible the "realm of openness," an open relation, in which beings abide in their mutual Being. Such is the "steadfastness" of Time.

The genius of Heidegger's "step back" consists in its ability to open up the "moment," as it were, and to demonstrate that it is a miniature "history" in which "transition" plays the key role - as in human history. And here in this moment the transition always both reveals and conceals. As beings come into Being and make their appearance, so at the same time does that which is common to all slip into oblivion. For, from the moment of arrival onwards, so long as they endure, they abide in both ontological and ontical difference, the former being the mystery that shrouds the "relation in unity," i.e., Identity, and the latter being the yet unfinished business of "scientific" differentiation involving "calculation" and "measurements" ad infinitum. In each case, however, there is an ele-

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78. Acts 17:28.

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ment of search involved. Onto-theo-logical thinking searches out the mystery abiding in the unity of Identity with Difference, and ontical, i.e., scientific, research divides ever more finely the "interval" separating the beings in their Being.

For Heidegger, however, the important "issue" coming out of the step back is "decision" (Austrag).<sup>80</sup> With his abiding interest in "thinking" the Difference and Identity of the Being of beings, it is a signal "event" indeed to find in this open, i.e., free, area of relation the origin of thought. For, when the roots of decision are found, so are the roots of the Logic and its "logic," indeed, the roots of the whole history of thought.<sup>81</sup>

But we are well advised to keep tabs on what is involved here. We must recall that Heidegger's Difference as Difference is not "what is different" in the almost vulgar sense that appears, say, between a thesis and its antithesis. This difference is merely the conventional variety and in no wise involves the thinker in the recollection of the oblivion of Being "as such." It is all well and good to think Being as just beyond the limits of this moment and therefore within easy reach if we merely "step back," but such behavior is far afield of that "metaphysical" thought which is onto-theo-logical.<sup>82</sup> For this latter recognizes the utter strangeness of Being, and our impotence in confronting it anywhere - even in the step back. Yet this procedure can, providing Being is concealed in obliv-

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80. p. 65f.

81. p. 66.

82. p. 72f.



ion, appreciate something of the Difference as Difference when this is realized to be still unthought. It has yet to come into conception, into the thinking process. It has yet to be formulated.

Oh, this description may sound easy enough, but Heidegger makes it extremely "difficult" because he thinks of it "historically."<sup>83</sup> Obviously, there is much which we as individuals have not yet thought, and it is a common experience to happen upon some "new" insight, but is it new to history? Has it never been thought before? Only if it has never before been thought can it become truly "destined" historically and become, as it were, a step back, that is, a step ahead in the course of history.

This, of course, means that one must not only be a student of history, say, as a specialist of the seventeenth Century, but he must be intimately acquainted with the whole history of thought as well. Now, this sounds like an impossible task, and surely it is if history is conceived here in the usual sense as the "goings on" during a particular period in history. This is why ontology looms so large in Heidegger's mind. Only as ontology can thought cope with all the beings which have ever existed; and only as ontology can thought cope with the single being to the extent that its own individuality is probed sufficiently to yield insight into its identity. And only when ontology becomes also and at the same time theology does it think logically

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83. p. 72.

enough to consistently move in the direction of the essence of truth which is simultaneously the truth of essence.

When "decision" is conceived as a totally new creature, a new being, a new step forward in history's destiny, then we can begin to appreciate why Heidegger can suggest that it is in decision that God comes into philosophy.

"God comes into philosophy through the decision which we think chiefly as the headquarters of the essence of the Difference between Being and being. The Difference determines the design in the structure of the essence of metaphysics."<sup>84</sup>

With this emphasis upon the "new" in the sense of that which actually alters the destiny of thought, is not Heidegger but highlighting, as it were, a turning point which is common to each of us in every moment of existence? Is he not intimating that in the history of the individual - probably destined never to be a pivotal figure in "world" history - Difference is nevertheless, along with Identity, the focus, if you will, of that "vibrating" realm wherein the moment of historical existence comes into being from out of its source in oblivion? Is he not speaking ontologically of the Nothing which "is" Time, to which even the Atom bows by leading logically in a "meta-" physical direction?

Perhaps these are not fair questions to put. They may disclose our own traditionally entrenched theological bent, namely, to "name" the God, a sport which the consistent ontologist can not bring himself to enjoy because no such "being"

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<sup>84</sup>. p. 70.



exists as such. Yet metaphysics has its own ways of "naming," though its names differ (in the crude sense) from theology's.

Can it be disputed that Heidegger has established an accord between Being and Time and the Nothing as these themselves accord in Difference and Identity with beings, history and something, respectively? And does he not specify that neither Being nor beings are prior to the other in the sense of the absolute ground, but that each grounds the other?<sup>85</sup> And if this be so, then surely, if Identity and Difference are the "relation in unity," that which effects this relation is prior to it. The mutual encirclement of each other by Being and beings<sup>86</sup> which constitutes the dialectical tension, or paradox, at this focal point must indicate that we have arrived at the exact "magnetic pole" where our compass needle simply goes round and round, leaving us in a tizzie - unless we appreciate that here we are truly on the threshold of the unknown, the unthought, the inconceivable, the immeasurable, incalculable, the truly mysterious which pervades all without exception, though in secret and quietly.

To venture the thesis that Time is for Heidegger, and consequently for onto-theo-logic, i.e., theology and philosophy, that which grounds the Logos and sends it on its "historical" way, i.e., on a "time line," is to our mind only saying explicitly what he says over and over again implicitly. At the very last in "Being and Time," he himself asks, "Does time itself manifest itself as the horizon of Being?"<sup>87</sup> And

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85. p. 70.

86. p. 68.

87. Op. cit., p. 485.

though he never answers this question explicitly, he nevertheless plows through his years of philosophizing since 1927 bringing his thought closer and closer to that magnetic pole where thought boggles and finally accedes to what is yet to be thought. Yet, future thought, i.e., historically destined thought, is thought which comes to be in time, that is, at the moment of its "transition" from "projected" future to "historical" being - neither future nor past, however, being in any way prior to the other in the most fundamental (grounding) sense. Nor is the "moment", that is, the coming-together of these two in Identity, prior either.

For, what has yet to be thought, though it grounds what has already been thought, is in no less way itself grounded by the latter - as with Being and beings. Hence, our focus must fasten upon the mystery inhering in this exact center "between" the two "differing" poles in this "relation" which is also an Identity. For, in the final analysis, it cannot be said that Being is simultaneously being, but only that "Being comes over into being" in the moment of "transition." Hence, Time enables, effects, and otherwise makes possible any motion, any movement, any agitation which consciousness senses in Identity and Difference, including the outcome, i.e., product, i.e., decision, which is thought. In this way do we find Heidegger "controlled" (even though he has reversed his stance and no longer faces it) by the Nothing which inheres as the interval "between" in Difference and as "the tie that binds" these differences together in Identity. He asks: "What of Difference 'adheres' both to



Being and to beings when these are thought in their primordial difference!"<sup>16</sup> And we answer: Time - in the sense of an "interval," a "moment," an oscillation, or movement, during which Being "comes over into beings, and in doing so is over-come. Thus is futurity hidden in presence, i.e., Da-sein, i.e., self-hood, i.e., Identity and Difference at one and the same time.

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88. p. 62.

## Chapter VIII

## Concluding Remarks

The first thing that we want to consider here is what was said in the first two sections of our Introduction (pp. 1-16), but more especially, section two (pp. 7-16). Indeed, we would ask the reader now to reread those pages, for they are our best attempt to summarize the results of our study as these are applicable to demythologizing. We cannot over-emphasize this study's relation to this latter. From demythologizing we departed, but only to return again.

The second consideration here is an appraisal of the results of our study. As we indicated at the close of our Introduction (p. 18), this study has been an experiment. It did not occur to us when we began that Time might possibly be considered a synonym for God. But as we progressed, this possibility became more and more apparent. Now, there has been much discussion through the years of the relation between the god of metaphysics and the God of theology, and it has been rather consistently maintained by theology that its God is not that which can be deduced by clever philosophical minds. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that philosophy has had considerable influence upon the church's doctrine of God as this doctrine has at various times been criticised by philosophy.<sup>1</sup>

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1. See, e.g., An Existentialist Theology, pp. 3 ff.



But if Heidegger is right in saying that he has brought to end the whole metaphysical tradition, originating in ancient Greece and culminating in Hegel and Nietzsche, then his doctrine should not be considered metaphysical. Indeed, as we have shown immediately above, he considers that those thoughts which have traditionally been separate (i.e., metaphysics and theology) have now been merged in "onto-theo-logic" in virtue of his Destruktion. Yet, our study suggests that what is ultimately prior in Heidegger's thought is not Being, but is rather the Nothing, the Ab-grund, i.e., Time itself, even though this latter cannot be considered apart from its occurrence in beings, i.e., in history. So that "onto-theo-logic" is not an adequate formula even yet for what Heidegger is apparently intending. Rather, it accords with the biblical correlation of God with history and the Word. At this point we are of the opinion that Time, as we understand it, is a one-word un-hyphenated formula for the unity which these three elements in biblical thought represent when its implications for history and language are spelled out to some degree.

Yet, it is not our immediate concern to construct another formula to replace Heidegger's - or the Bible's either, for that matter. Rather, it is merely to suggest that we may indeed have in the concept of Time the heart of the biblical doctrine of God.

Now, it should be understood that this conclusion is only

tentative, if for no other reason than that it was culled from a study of a "philosopher" of existence. In retrospect, we wonder why the better course would not have been to study, say, Bultmann's Theology of the New Testament.<sup>2</sup> For, it is based on the Bible itself and its study would afford more insight as to the proximity of these two heretofore distinct notions.<sup>3</sup> But the fact is that Heidegger's thought provides the primordial requisites for such a study of Bultmann. Such matters as "objectification," "ground," "the Nothing," "Truth," etc. - for us, at least - were essential to building a basic understanding of Time as it is revealed in and to existence.

Perhaps now, that is, after such a background understanding has been gained, we can again turn to Bultmann's theology and conduct a study that would be fruitful in the sense of affording a positive correlation of Time with God. But this could not be done before our bout with Heidegger.

Our contention, then, is this: that the suggestion we have made is only tentative, that is, of a very provisional nature. We are content that Heidegger's thought yields to a temporal interpretation grounds for seriously considering this possibility, but until it is measured by scripture itself, nothing of a definitive nature can be concluded one way or another.

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2. My teacher will recall that such a study was actually made in 1963, but with inconclusive results.

3. Indeed! Cf. S. Ogden's essay, "The Temporality of God" in Zeit und Geschichte, the Festschrift in honor of Bultmann's 80th birthday, J. C. B. Mohr, Tübingen, 1964. Here Ogden seems to think that it's about time God's "temporality" is considered.



But so that the reader may have some assurance that such a study would not be without some merit, we will take a moment or two to apply this clue which we maintain is significant to demythologizing. At that point in the first volume of Bultmann's Theology of the New Testament where he takes up "Man under Faith," we consider his first heading: "The Righteousness of God," but more particularly, "The Concept of Righteousness."<sup>4</sup> We begin with his first paragraph:

"Since Paul regards man's existence prior to faith in the transparency it has gained to the eye of faith, man's existence under faith has therefore already been indirectly pre-sketched in the presentation of pre-faith existence. If pre-faith man is man fallen into the power of death, man under faith is man who receives life. If man's death has its cause in the fact that man in his striving to live out of his own resources loses his self, life arises out of surrendering one's self to God, thereby gaining one's self."<sup>5</sup>

Our initial concern here is to interpret "pre-faith man" as "fallen into the power of death," an eventuality which has cost him his "life," i.e., his "self." What has been "lost" we take to be ex-sistence, or that existence which is prior to all that is objectified in the act of objectification - including the objectified, i.e., "historical," self. Fallen man, in a word, has "forgotten" that there is a difference between himself and history - as well as an identity. He sees only the calcified forms of history, and is panic-stricken; he looks everywhere and tries everything, in order hopefully to recapture something of that security he once knew (as a child, perhaps) when this difference, though pre-conceptual, was "known"

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4. Op. cit., pp. 270ff. - hereafter referred to only by page number.

5. p. 270.

nevertheless. This time of innocence - mythically depicted in scripture as the Garden of Eden - is before "knowledge" of the historical "world" and of "language" has become sufficiently formulated to allow one to navigate in adult society with a degree of assurance. It is a child's "ignorance" of the conventions of his particular culture, wherever and whenever it occurs.

Fallen man, then, because he has lost the difference between historical and eternal existence, has lost his "life," and knows himself to be a "sinner" to the extent that something is "missing" in his life. This "loss of life" is in Paul called "death." And the winning back of this difference in equal measure with "identity with history," is the rising from death to life, i.e., resurrection. And this, because the "oscillation" which is the movement, or flow, of time returns from its primordial source in the ever-future. Once this dynamic is restored, man is no longer "fallen," but is "faithful," and "knows" precisely "what" it is that has given him his new lease on life. He has been freed from the restrictions of historical formulations. "Sticks and stones can break his bones, but words can never hurt him." This childhood proverb takes on intense meaning: no verbal formulations - not even the Bible's - can ever separate him from the love of the "living" God once this difference is recaptured.

"Surrendering one's self to God" is here taken to mean the thoughtful recollection (afforded by insight into the nature



of existence as both finite and eternal) of the primacy, the priority, of the future (as ever-future) over all historical forms, and the grateful accession to this primacy. Nothing is really "surrendered," however, when this term carries a sense of a "forced" surrender. Rather, it is as Paul (?) put it in his letter to the Philippians (3:4-16):

"Though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh [history?] also. ...whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as refuse ... that I may know him and the power of his resurrection. ... Brethren, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead. I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."<sup>6</sup>

After the introductory paragraph which we have been considering, Bultmann maintains that the insight there expressed is precisely what Paul meant in his interpretation of "righteousness."<sup>7</sup>

"Strictly speaking, righteousness is the condition for receiving salvation or 'life.' ... It is to those who are rightwised that salvation will be imparted (Rom. 5:1ff.). As sin led to death, so righteousness leads to life (Rom. 5:17, 21; 8:10). The goal ahead of him who has righteousness is the reign of life (Phil. 3:9f.). ...

But since this connection between righteousness and salvation is so tight and inevitable, righteousness itself can become the essence of salvation."<sup>8</sup>

From this Bultmann goes on to explain that righteousness is a "forensic-eschatological" term. "...it is already imputed to a man in the present (on the presupposition that he 'has

6. From the Revised Standard Version, Thomas Nelson & Sons, New York, etc., 1952; our italics added for emphasis.

7. p. 270. 8. p. 270f.

faith!)." By "forensic-eschatological" he means that this future possibility has already been given - as by a court of which God is the judge, not man. "It does not mean the ethical quality of a person," as evinced by historizing objectification.

"It does not mean any quality at all, but a relationship. That is, dikaiosyne is not something a person has as his own; rather it is something he has in the verdict of the 'forum' ... to which he is accountable. He has it in the opinion adjudicated to him by another."<sup>9</sup>

It is quite apparent that the term "eschatological" for Bultmann is suggestive both of future time and of the possibilities that the future apparently offers.<sup>10</sup> And when he speaks of righteousness as a "present reality" he is saying something to the effect that the present and future meet, as it were, in a tension within existence in such a way that both are felt and known. The future judgment is beginning now.<sup>11</sup> It is this "relation" between the eschatological, i.e., future, and the present as perceived historically. Righteousness speaks to this relation and suggests the primacy of the future as possibility over the present when this latter is conceived as history. So that the effect upon "present" existence is that of opening it up to possibilities, rather than pressing it down into calcified historical formulations, i.e., judgments.

We next consider a yet more complicated relation:

"The present reality of righteousness rests upon its having

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9. p. 271f.

10. See, e.g., his discussions of soma (pp. 192ff, esp. p. 196) and of kosmos (pp. 254ff., esp. p. 256).

11. p. 276.



been 'revealed' by the occurring of salvation in Chr. 1st (Rom. 3:21-26; 11 Cor. 5:21; cf. 1 Cor. 1:30). This saving occurrence, however, is the eschatological event by which God ended the old course of the world and introduced the new aeon."<sup>12</sup>

Here we have all three temporal realms suggested: the past, as "event," the present, and the future, as "eschatological." Bultmann's Christological formulation, then, is this: Christ is the "present eschatological occurrence," where this last named has the quality of "event": it happens, has happened, and is yet still to happen. This temporally complicated formula with its two areas of "relation": between the past and present, and between the present and future, is the one Christological formulation. It suggests that Christ speaks to both of these relations, indeed, is "Lord" of them. Hence, our earlier suggestion<sup>13</sup> to the effect that that which seems to be intended in such a formulation is none other than the self-affection, the self-identification, of Time with itself. Both identity and difference inhere in these relations. And only because they are both temporal relations can they be said to be one relation. The "one" relation in Bultmann's formulation - as we are now interpreting it - is Christ, that is to say, Time, as it is manifest in existence. Christ is said to be the revelation because he (Jesus of Nazareth) was an historic figure who demonstrated once and for all the connection (i.e., "Incarnation") between God and man. Indeed, he is this connection, and we,

12. p. 278. See esp. in this connection pp. 286ff: Bultmann's discussion of "grace."

13. See above, p. 235f.

as Christians, find our life in Christ, that is, in this con-  
nection which is both Identity and Difference.

With this brief study of but a few pages of Bultmann's Theology of the New Testament we are enabled to see that the insight afforded in our study of Heidegger now seems to make possible a positive correlation between our doctrine of Time and the Biblical doctrine of God. But it is much too brief to afford conclusive evidence that the relation between them is one of complete accord. Again, we must be satisfied with but a provisional, tentative, conclusion, one that resembles a question more than it does a statement or principle.

This study has for us, then, the character of a first step in the wobbly business of learning to walk if our intention is to interpret scripture in a way that will open up to modern man a way of thought which for some of us has been at the same time revelation and salvation.

We cannot go into the implications which this mode of existentialist interpretation opens up. Needless to say, they are manifold and very exciting - as dimly seen from this provisional perspective. They make the need to continue the investigation of such interpretation a desperate one. But this, alas, must await another time, another effort, another paper, another title, and possibly another writer.

Without in the least indulging in false modesty, we say that there are many who are far better qualified to make the



study we have just made, and then to continue in working out its correlation with Bultmann's theology. Our contribution, if any, has been but to suggest an orientation, an hermeneutical clue, for interpreting both Heidegger's and Bultmann's thought.

Which brings us to our final thought which we reiterate, namely, that ours has been interpretation. It makes no pretense at re-presenting Heidegger's own thought. Rather, it approaches his thought and with "violence" wrests from it what he himself did not say. Ours is, according to Heidegger's own practise and teaching, a case of "historical" thinking in that it finds in historical documents what has never been thought before - so far as we know. It is an instance, then, of those "simple decisions" which account for, i.e., make, history.<sup>14</sup> Whether or not it looms up in history and becomes pivotal remains to be seen. We cannot at this point claim to have brought about the end of the whole history of traditional theological thought, not only because our conclusion is tentative, but also because such a claim can only be made relative to the thought that is supposedly being brought to end. That is, it is made relative to history. Therefore, it is itself historical and is but a continuation of that history, however pivotal it may become in influencing the course which history takes.

If our suggestion does prove to be a clue to biblical interpretation, it will have managed no more than to make

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14. Existence and Being, p. 309.

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explicit for our own age what evidently was sufficiently explicit for the writers, preachers, and audience of New Testament times to communicate the relation between God and man. That is, if Time proves to be a clue to the "heart" of the biblical witness, then all it does is expose to present-day understanding what is already there. It will merely illuminate, but in so doing, will communicate not only the knowledge implicit in the kerygma, but the kerygma itself.<sup>15</sup>

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15. See above, p. 5, the quotation from Bultmann's Theology of the New Testament Vol II, p. 251.



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